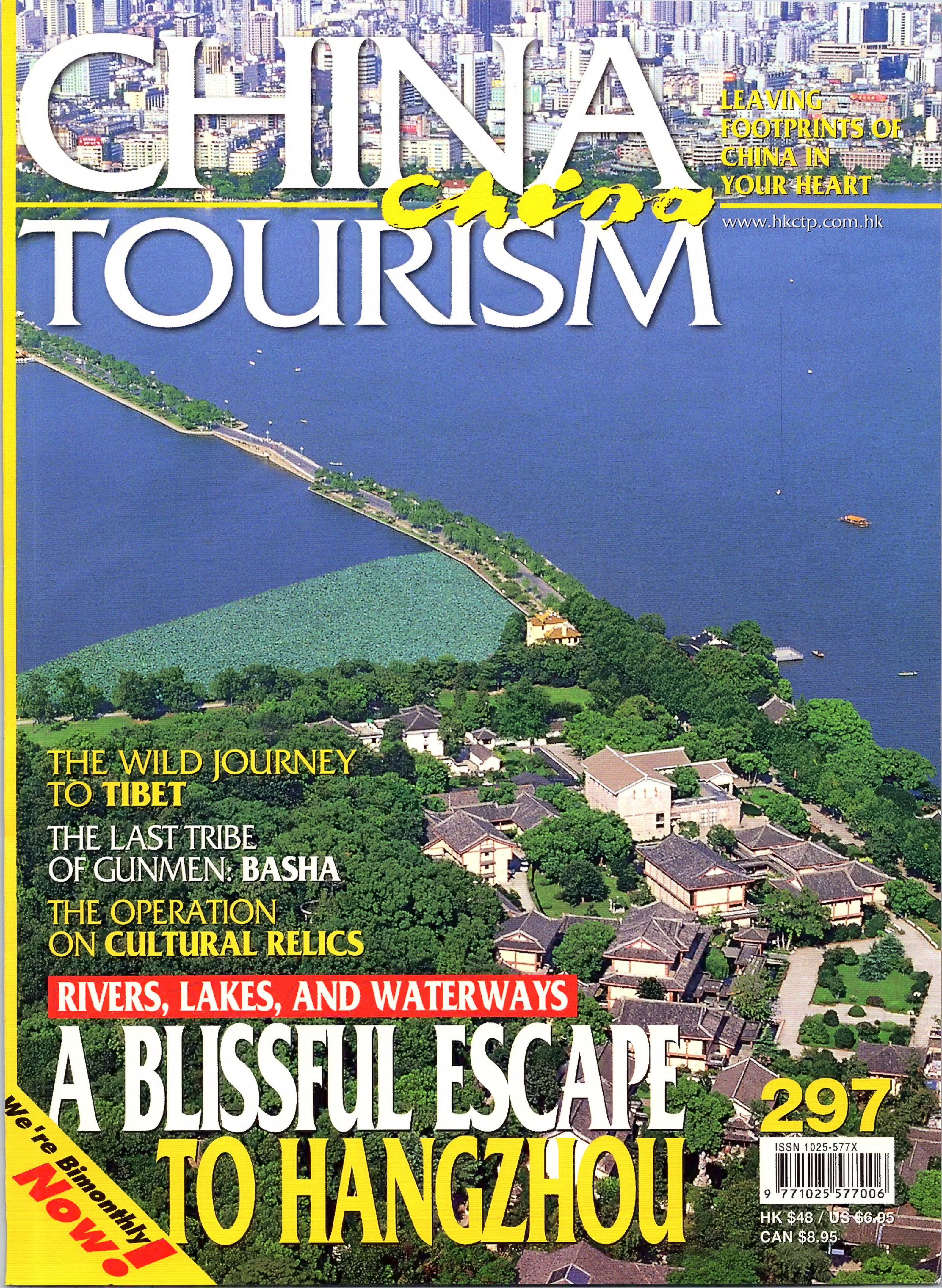

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Mt. Huangshan, situated in the south of Anhui Province, is one of the most famous scenic areas in China. Being put into the World Heritage List, it is also granted with two laurels of cultural heritage and natural heritage by the UNESCO's World Heritage Commission.

The landscape of the mountain is a typical granite hoodoo landform shaped during the long geological periods by several tectonic movements in the crust. Mt. Huangshan has long been famous for its strange-looking pine trees, grotesque rocks, sea of clouds and hot springs.

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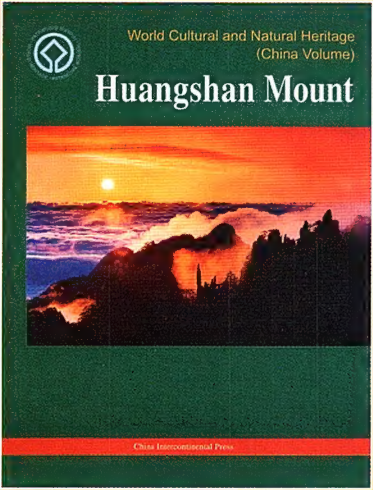
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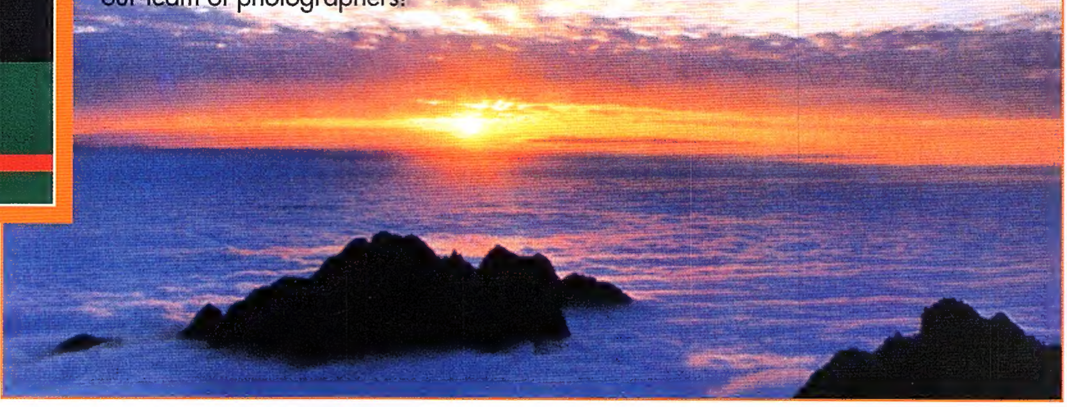

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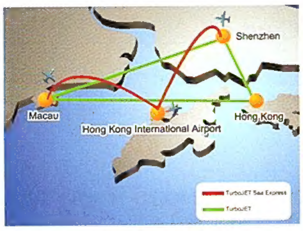

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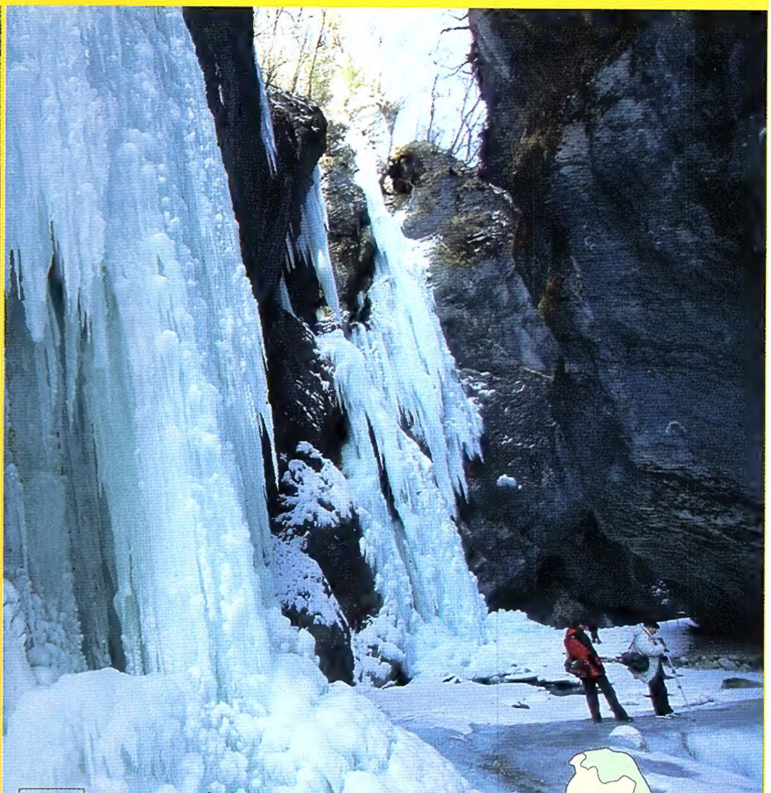

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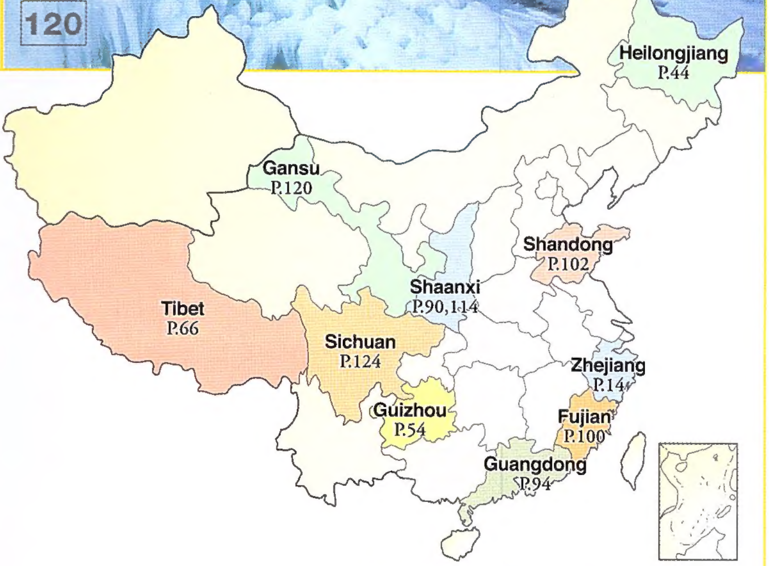
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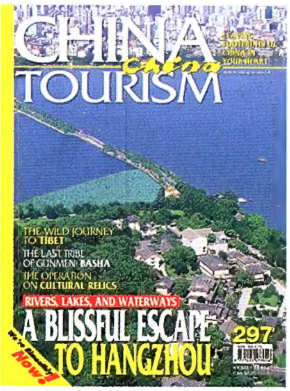
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Hangzhou
(by Xie Guanghui)

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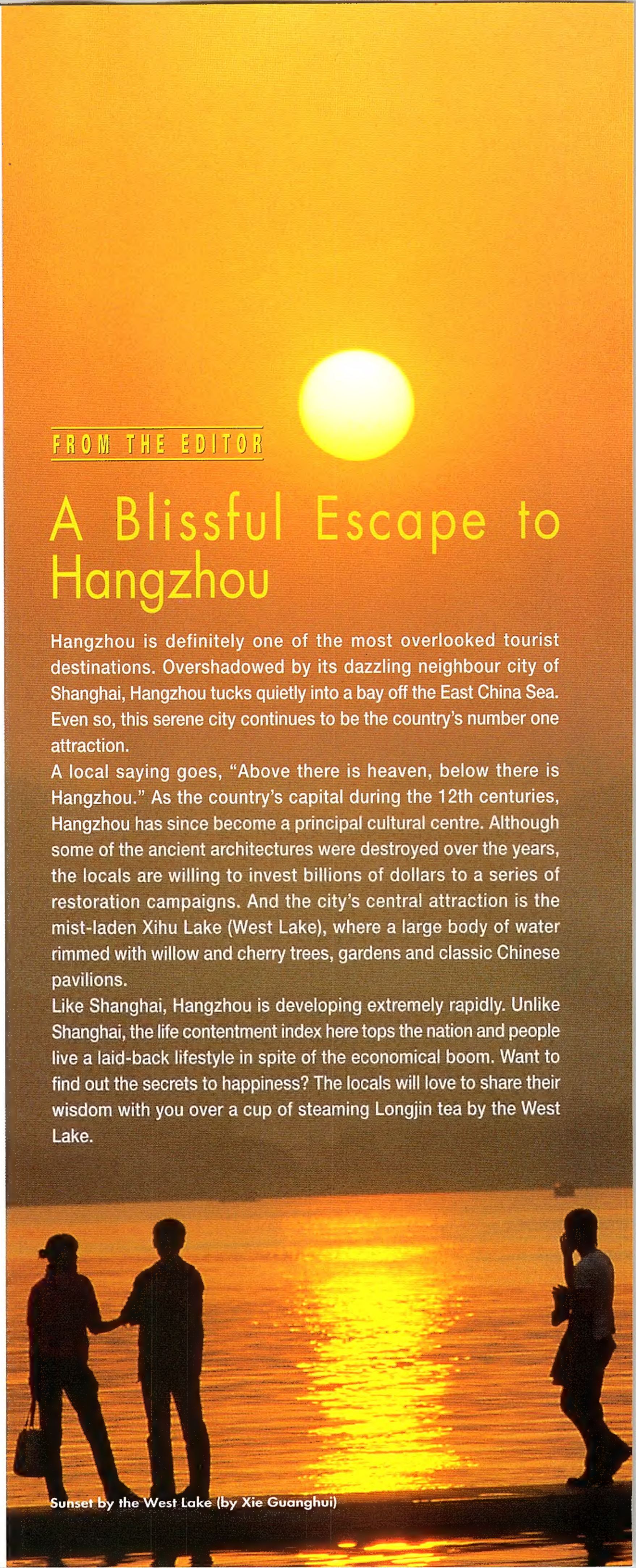


FROM THE EDITOR

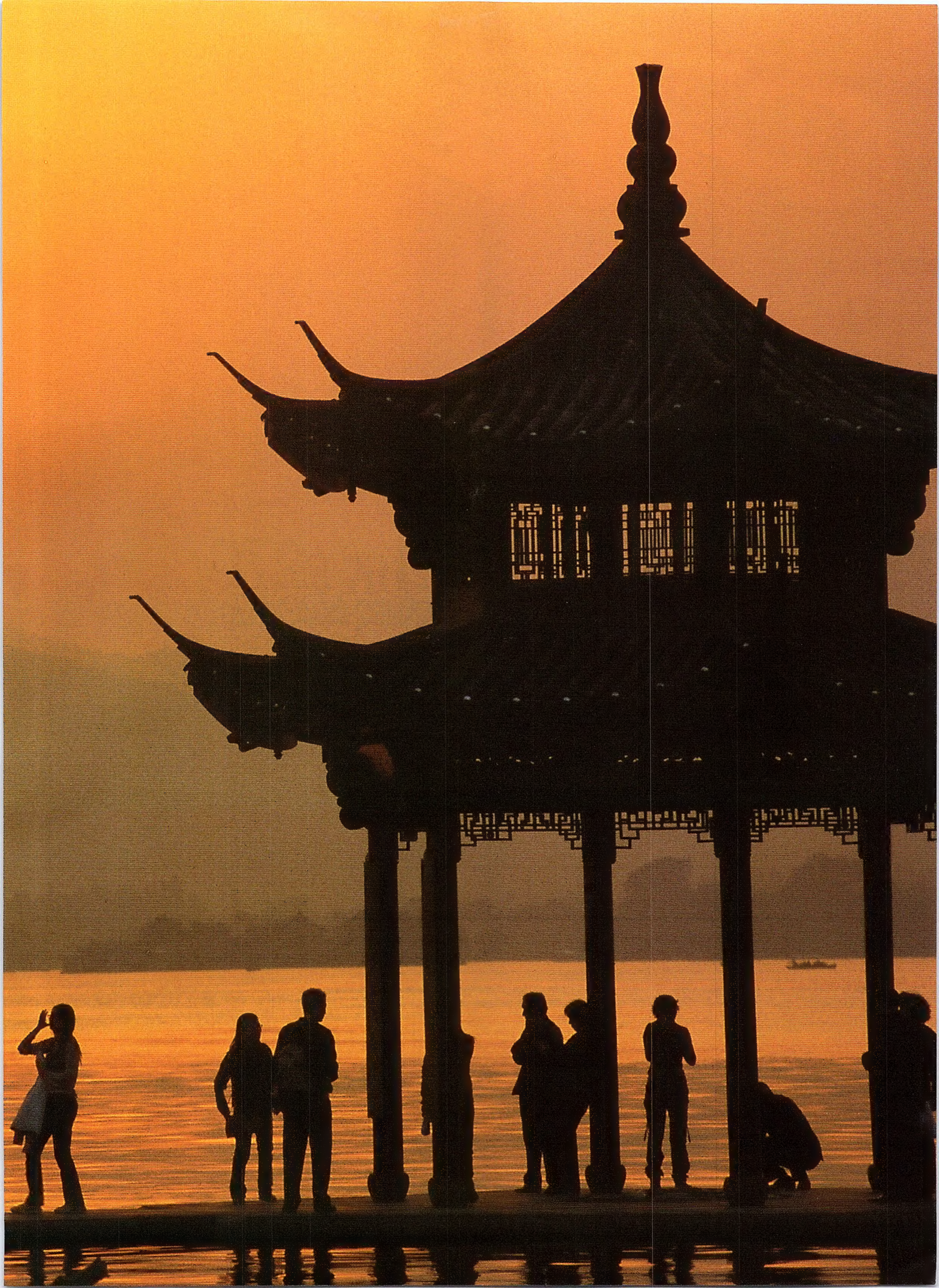
A Blissful Escape to Hangzhou

Hangzhou is definitely one of the most overlooked tourist destinations. Overshadowed by its dazzling neighbour city of Shanghai, Hangzhou tucks quietly into a bay off the East China Sea. Even so, this serene city continues to be the country's number one attraction.

A local saying goes, "Above there is heaven, below there is Hangzhou." As the country's capital during the 12th centuries, Hangzhou has since become a principal cultural centre. Although some of the ancient architectures were destroyed over the years, the locals are willing to invest billions of dollars to a series of restoration campaigns. And the city's central attraction is the mist-laden Xihu Lake (West Lake), where a large body of water rimmed with willow and cherry trees, gardens and classic Chinese pavilions.

Like Shanghai, Hangzhou is developing extremely rapidly. Unlike Shanghai, the life contentment index here tops the nation and people live a laid-back lifestyle in spite of the economical boom. Want to find out the secrets to happiness? The locals will love to share their wisdom with you over a cup of steaming Longjin tea by the West Lake.

Sunset by the West Lake (by Xie Guanghui)



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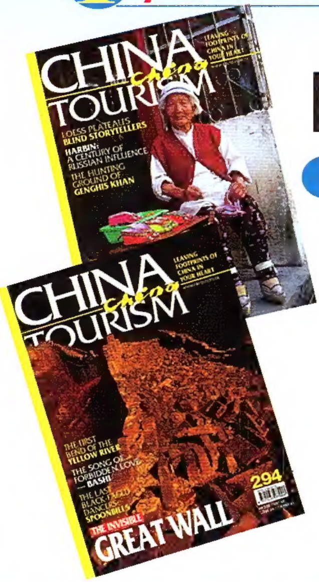

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The beginning of Chinese New Year (February, 2005) is normally a time for reflection and new direction, and we're starting this year by going **bimonthly with 56 more pages per issue**, giving you more in-depth coverage on topics that you're interested in.

Asides from bringing you the newest update, practical travel tips, street smart discounts, souvenir ideas and exotic adventures, we will also offer in-depth in issues that shaped China today.

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Regulation on Great Wall Protection Expected to be Promulgated

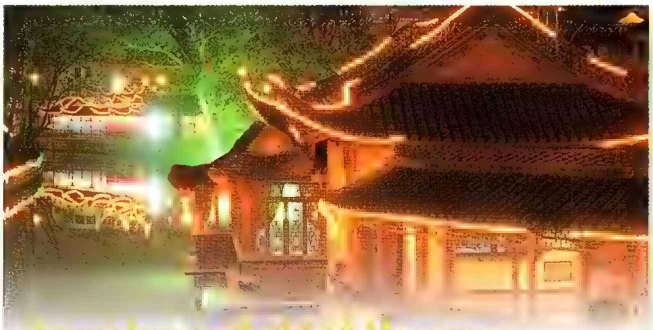
The regulation on the protection and administration of the famous Great Wall, being scrutinised by the State Council, is likely to be promulgated later this year. The regulation has been drafted and submitted to the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council, and has been listed as the department's administrative project. The main points of the regulation cover the scope of protection, control of construction projects adjacent to the Great Wall, and penalties for those who causes damages.

China to Build its First "Science City" in Hefei

The central government plan to build Hefei, the capital of Anhui Province, into a city boasting green environment, advanced information sharing, a strong cultural atmosphere and scientific creation capability that could attract scientific talent from around the world.

With an estimated investment of ¥13.85 billion (US $1.67 billion), 25 projects, covering a variety of fields including scientific research, industrialisation, education, commerce and infrastructure construction, have been announced. Four projects have commenced, with a cost of more ¥300 million (US $36.2 million). The provincial and local government will invest ¥150 million (US ¥18.1 million) each year.

It is hoped that the reform of Hefei will be an example for China to develop its regional innovation system.



Yangzhou to Build 10 Museums

The 2,500-year-old city of Yangzhou in east China will build 10 museums and exhibition halls to show its charm. The project plan has taken form after consultation attended by relevant officers and experts, and will be implemented soon.

The 10 expected museums will be built in the style of ancient architecture. They include a folk collection exhibition hall, a traditional Chinese medical science museum, a city industry museum, a Yangzhou-style potted landscape exhibition hall, an animal specimens museum, a Yangzhou cuisine museum, a canal culture museum, a Buddhism museum, a bridge museum and an art exhibition center. Yangzhou is one of the 24 famous historical and cultural cities of China announced by the State Council in 1982.

Shaolin Kung Fu to Apply for World's Intangible Heritage

Preparations have begun for Shaolin Kung Fu's application for the World Intangible Heritage list. The application has to be approved by the Chinese Ministry of Culture before a final submission is presented to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The ancient Shaolin transcripts recorded 708 groups of "Kung Fu", among which 545 groups have survived. Shaolin Kung Fu serves religious and cultural purposes and should not be separated from Buddhism. Kung Fu, as a part of Shaolin culture, consists of Zen of Chinese Buddhism, martial arts, medical sciences and arts.

Hainan Air Places US $90m Engines

Hainan Airlines Co., which lists shares on the Shanghai Stock Exchange, places a US $90 million order with CFM International for engines to power eight aircraft.

CFM International is a joint venture between General Electric Co. and Snecma Moteurs. The order is for CFM56-5B engines to power eight Airbus A319 aircraft. Hainan Airlines, which also takes options on 12 additional A319s, will take delivery between 2005 and 2007.

Zhejiang to Build World's Second Longest Suspension Bridge

Construction of two bridges connecting Zhoushan Archipelago, the largest China's offshore island groups in Zhejiang Province, with the mainland is scheduled to be completed in 2008. The Xihoumen Bridge, 3.5 km long, is a suspension bridge consisting of a 2.6 km sea-crossing bridge and 2.7 km side joint sections on both ends. The total investment is ¥2.48 billion (US $299.87 million). The bridge will be the second longest in the world. Linking Jintang and Cezi islands, two major islands of the Zhoushan Archipelago, the bridge can allow ships of 30, 000 dwt (dead weight tonnage). The Jintang Bridge, linking Jintang Island and Zhenhai of Ningbo, will be 27 km long. The seven billion yuan (US $846.43 million) project consists of a 18.5-km sea-spanning bridge and side joint sections on both ends totaling 8.5 km. The bridge allows passage of ships of 50,000 dwt.

Qinghai Vows to Better Serve National Energy Need

Energy industry has been prioritised in Qinghai's future development plan. Known for cradling the Yangtze, Yellow and Lancang rivers, Qinghai is one of the regions garnering the most abundant water and mineral resources. The water energy capacity yet to be developed in the province totals 21.65 million kw, ranking the fifth nationwide. Presently, around five million kilowatts electricity is generated annually, mostly powered by water, and the figure is expected to double in five years following the completion of another six hydropower stations. Qinghai also aims to increase the annual natural gas production output from the current four million to 10 million tn in five years.

Yellow River Listed as UNESCO's Research Subject

The Institute of Water Education of UNESCO has issued a book about Yellow River and lists it as its research subject. The book introduces the status of the Yellow River and the Loess Plateau, the history of the harnessing of the river and the problems the river is now facing. The Netherlands-based institute is dedicated to researching global water resources and has over 190 affiliates worldwide. Over the years it has trained more than 12,000 experts, specialists and scholars from over 120 countries.

Construction of Beijing-Tianjin Inter-City Railway to Start in July

The construction of Beijing-Tianjin inter-city railway, scheduled to start in July, will be completed by December 2007 and put into operation in July 2008. The overall length of the railway is 115 km and the velocity of trains can reach 200 km/hr. The Beijing-Tianjin inter-city traffic system will be the first high-level passenger special railway that China constructs. The railway connects Beijing and Tianjin, and is one of the key projects for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Environmental Education Campaign Kicks Off

A programme to promote environmental education in central and western China, funded by the General Electric Foundation, is launched at the Beijing Normal University. The programme will last three to five years. GE Foundation, the philanthropic organisation of the General Electric Company, will provide US $75,000 for the programme. The university will conduct a research on the state of environmental education in central and western China and compile books for primary and middle school students. Lectures and public activities will also be organised. According to a research carried out by students in the university, it is an urgent task to improve the quality of teachers on environmental education in central and western China.

SICHUAN

Sichuan "Red" Tours Retrace Steps of Long March

Tours to sites associated with the Long March, an epic journey undertaken by the Red Army in 1934-35, are being promoted. Travellers can now follow the revolutionaries' footsteps in Sichuan Province on a "Red" tour promoted by the local government. Tourists will be able to cross snow-capped mountains and plod through grassy swamps, just as the Red Army men did 70 years ago. They will also visit the old residence of Deng Xiaoping. "Red" tours will be introduced to Hong Kong and Macao residences in May, and to foreigners in the future.

It is hoped that the number of tourists visiting former revolutionary sites will witness an annual increase of 18% between 2005 and 2010.

HONG KONG

Hong Kong to Build Sun Yat-sen Museum

The Hong Kong government plans to repair an old local building and turn it into a Sun Yat-sen Museum. Kom Tong Hall, which was acquired by the government last year for HKD $53 million (US $6.8 million), will undergo facelift of HKD $91 million (US $11.7 million) to become the museum. The Home Affairs Bureau aims to complete conversion works by the end of 2006, pending Legislative Council funding approval, to tie in with the 140th anniversary of the birth of Dr Sun.

The museum is expected to be opened in 2007, and will include a permanent exhibition on Dr Sun's life and revolutionary career with special reference to the political and socio-economic conditions of Hong Kong in the late 19th century.

ZHEJIANG

Hangzhou West Lake Museum to Open in Autumn

The West Lake Museum in Hangzhou is expected to open in October. The construction of the museum has been completed recently. About 200 pieces of rare cultural relics and more than 2,000 documents have been collected to show the lake's culture and histroy. Hangzhou plans to invest ¥150 million (US $18 million) on protecting its historical relics, such as establishing the West Lake Museum. With an area of about six square kilometres, West Lake is surrounded by three isles — Lesser Yingzhou, Mid-lake Pavilion and Ruangong Isle.

West Lake, Hangzhou

BEIJING

Beijing Repairs Confucian Temple, Imperial College

Beijing has launched a massive maintenance project on the centuries-old Confucian Temple and Imperial College.

The maintenance work, in which the city will invest about eight million yuan (US $963,800), is expected to last 12 months. The renovation includes dismantling modern style architecture on the sites' grounds, and is the most extensive one in past 50 years. After the work, more of the sites' cultural relics will be open to visitors. The two places will remain open during the maintenance work.

BEIJING

Beijing Subway Introduces Air-Con

The Beijing Subway announced that all trains running on the Batong Line, which extends from the eastern terminus of Sihui Dong to the residential areas of Tongzhou District, would be air conditioned.

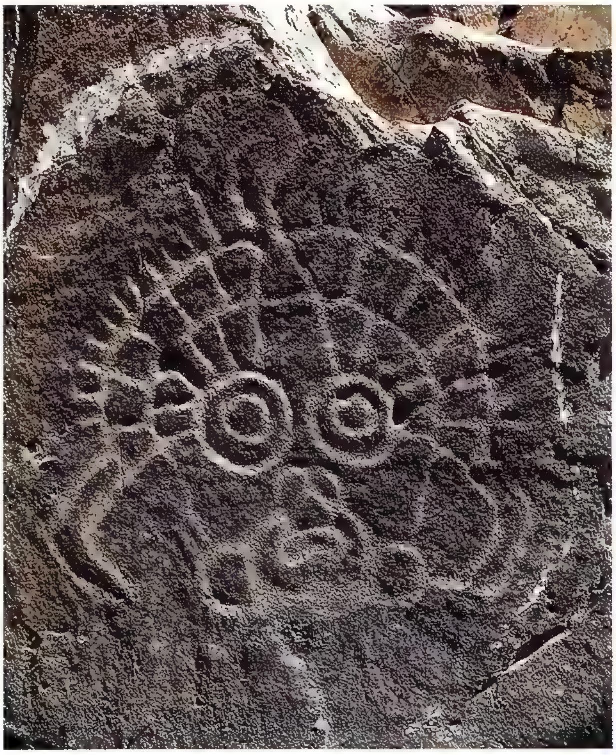
There are currently 24 trains running on the Batong line. So far 11 trains are air-conditioned and the project for the remaining 13 trains will be completed this summer.

Since the Batong section began operating in 2003, there have been frequent complaints about the conditions inside the carriages, especially during summer.

NINGXIA

Ningxia More Cliff Paintings Found

Seventy-two cliff paintings were recently discovered at Helan Mountain in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The paintings, in 28 groups, are of sheep, deer, horse, tiger, donkey and human faces. They spread over a 15 km in length between Helankou and Chaqikou. This is the largest group of cliff paintings discovered in the past three years. The area is carved with stone and metal tools by nomads, and the paintings displayed scenes of herding, hunting, offering sacrifices and life episodes some 3,000 to 10,000 years ago. Animals dominate the cliff paintings, followed by figures, transports, plants, planets, fingerprints, written characters and abstract signs.



QINGHAI

Qinghai-Tibet Railway to Start Trial Run

Qinghai-Tibet Railway is to complete track laying by the end of this year and go into trial operation on July 1, 2006. The construction of the 1,142 km railway was started in 2001 with an investment of ¥26.2 billion (US $3.16 billion).

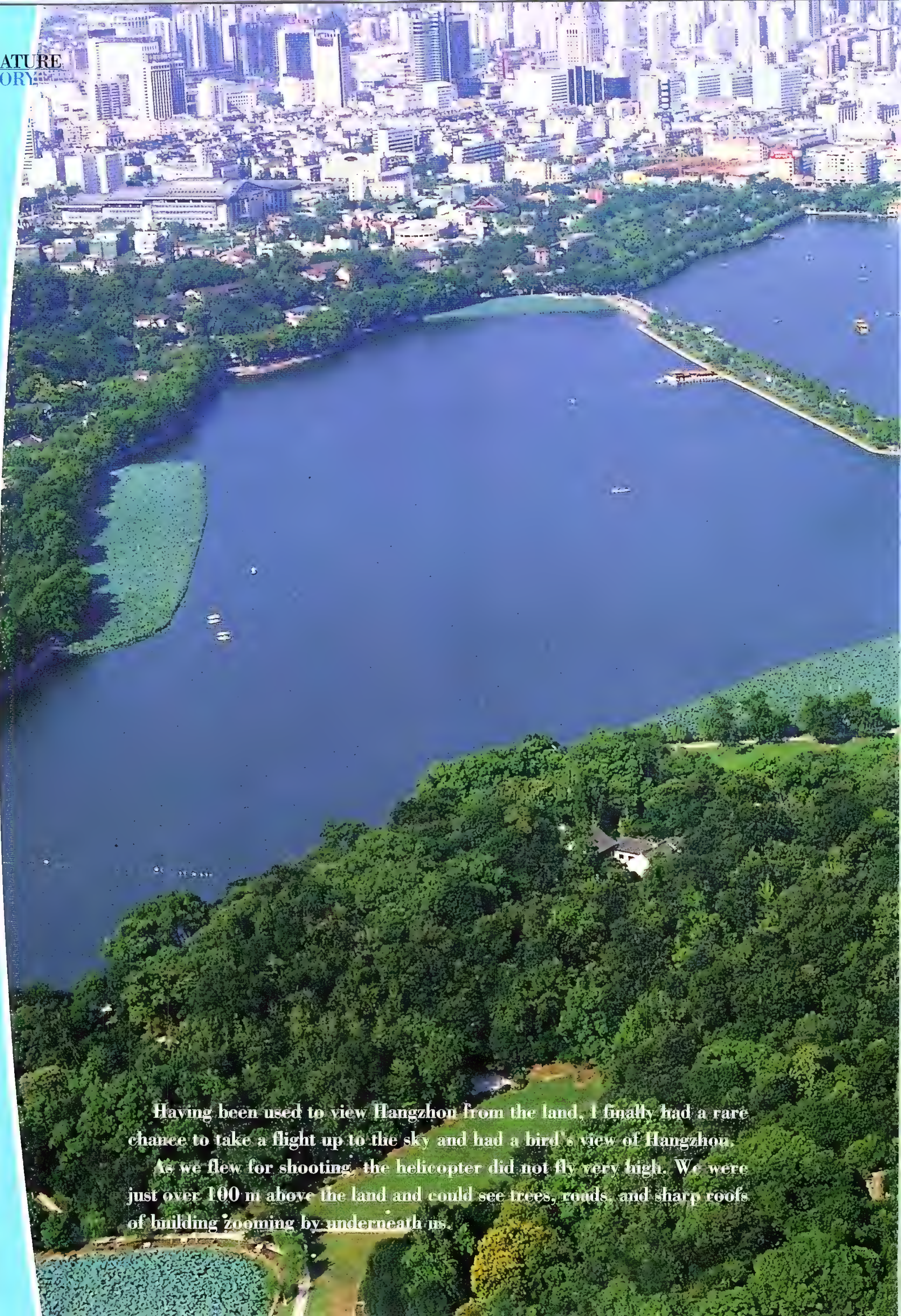
The railway from Golmud in Qinghai Province to Lhasa is a landmark project in China's blueprint to develop its western regions. It is the most elevated rail route in the world. About 960 km of the railway are above 4,000 m high and its most elevated sections reach 5,072 m. The railway also highlights ecosystem protection, with 8% of the total construction cost budgeted for ecological conservation.

After its open in 2007, the railway is expected to link Lhasa with Xining, Qinghai's provincial capital, and other major cities such as Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

CHINA

Non-Stop Flights to Moscow in April

Eying the potential of the travel market in Eastern Europe, China Eastern Airlines Co. has began non-stop flights to Moscow in April. The opening of non-stop flights to Moscow is one of the significant targets for the company to increase revenue from tourism this year. The increasing number of tourists rushing to Eastern Europe is creating a demand for huge passenger capacity. A survey conducted by the company shows that 60 to 70% of the passengers in each airplane flying to Moscow are tourists. The company is also preparing to open other non-stop flights to Frankfurt, Germany, in 2006.

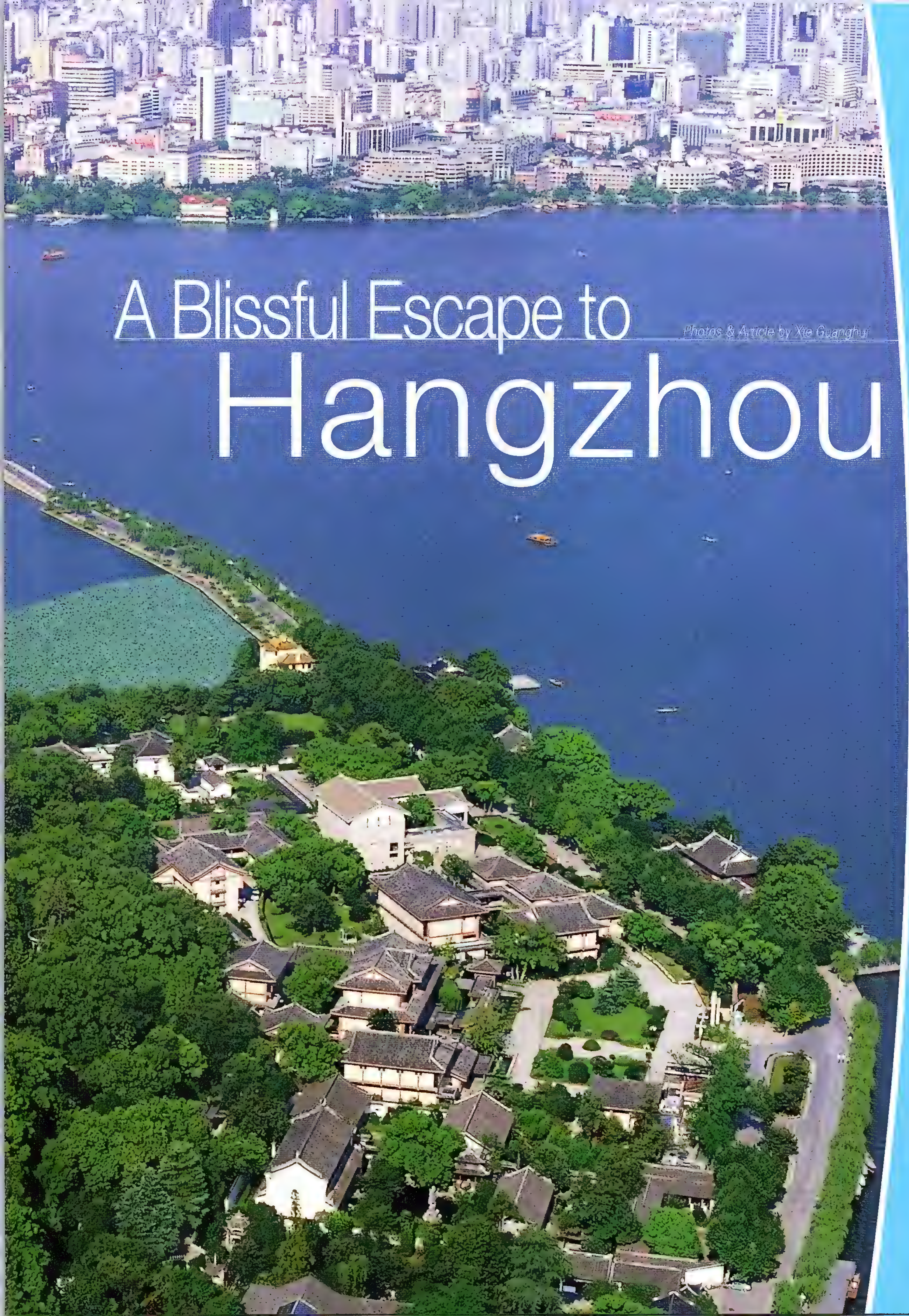


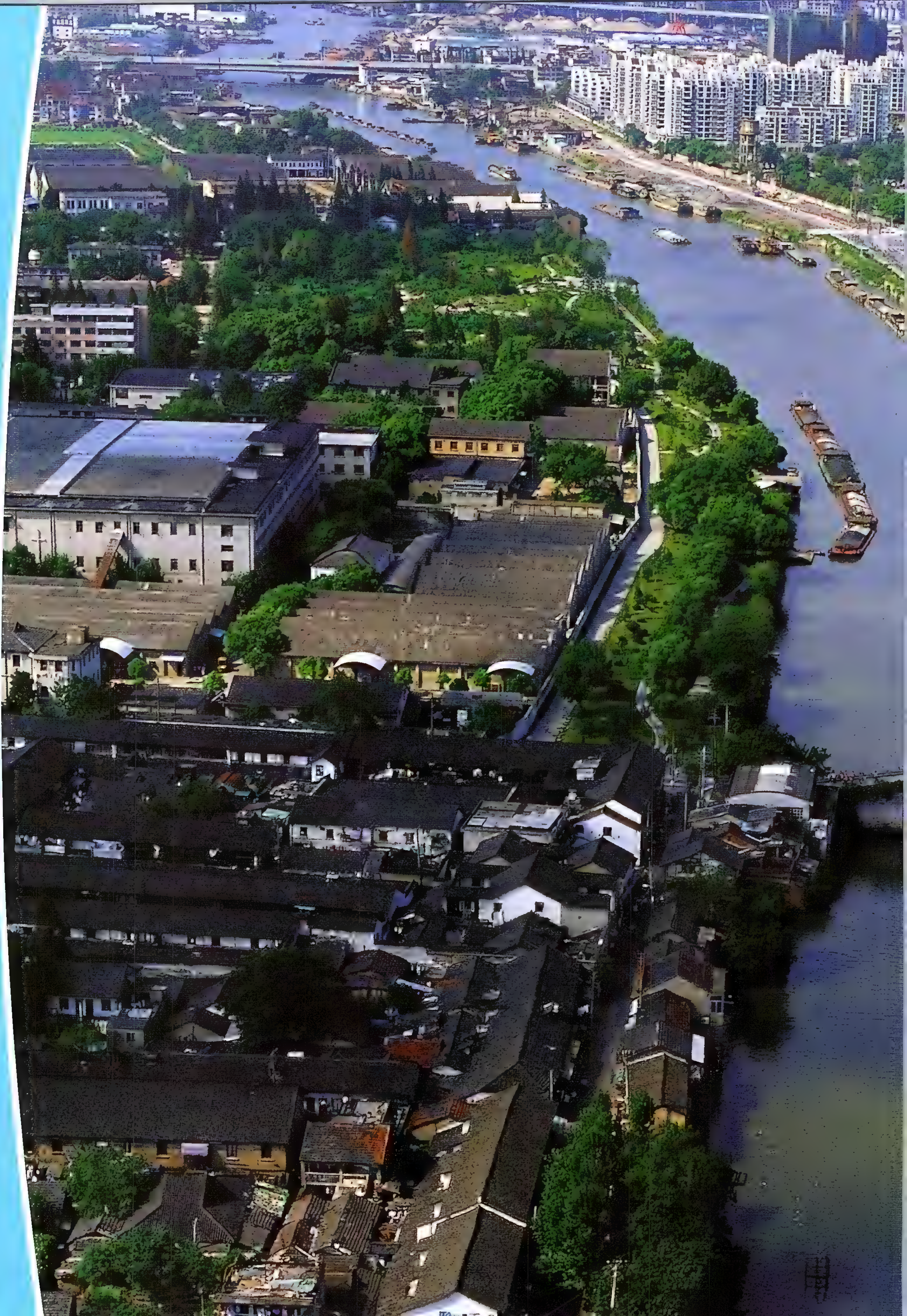
Having been used to view Hangzhou from the land, I finally had a rare chance to take a flight up to the sky and had a bird's view of Hangzhou.

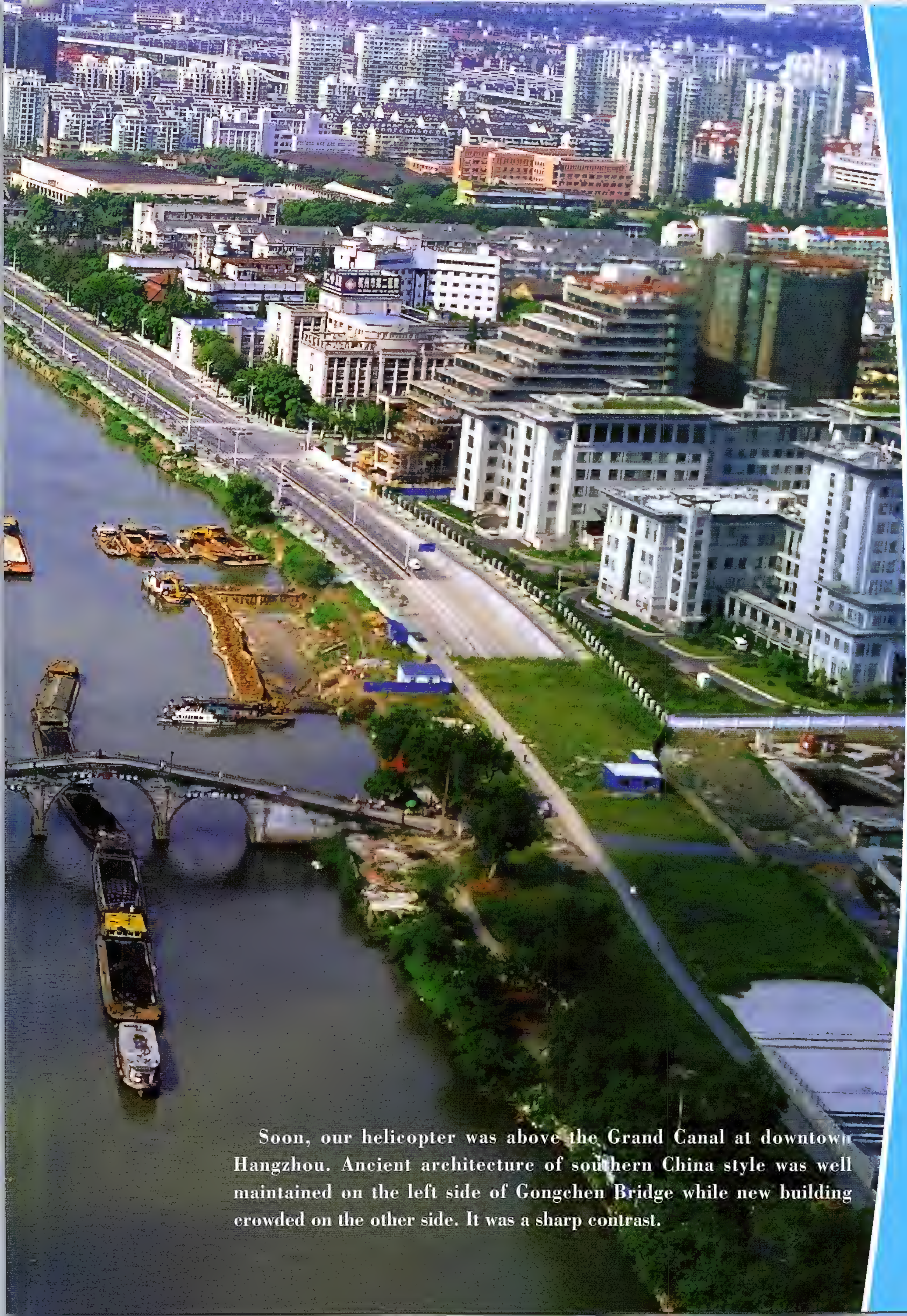
As we flew for shooting, the helicopter did not fly very high. We were just over 100 m above the land and could see trees, roads, and sharp roofs of building zooming by underneath us.

A Blissful Escape to Hangzhou

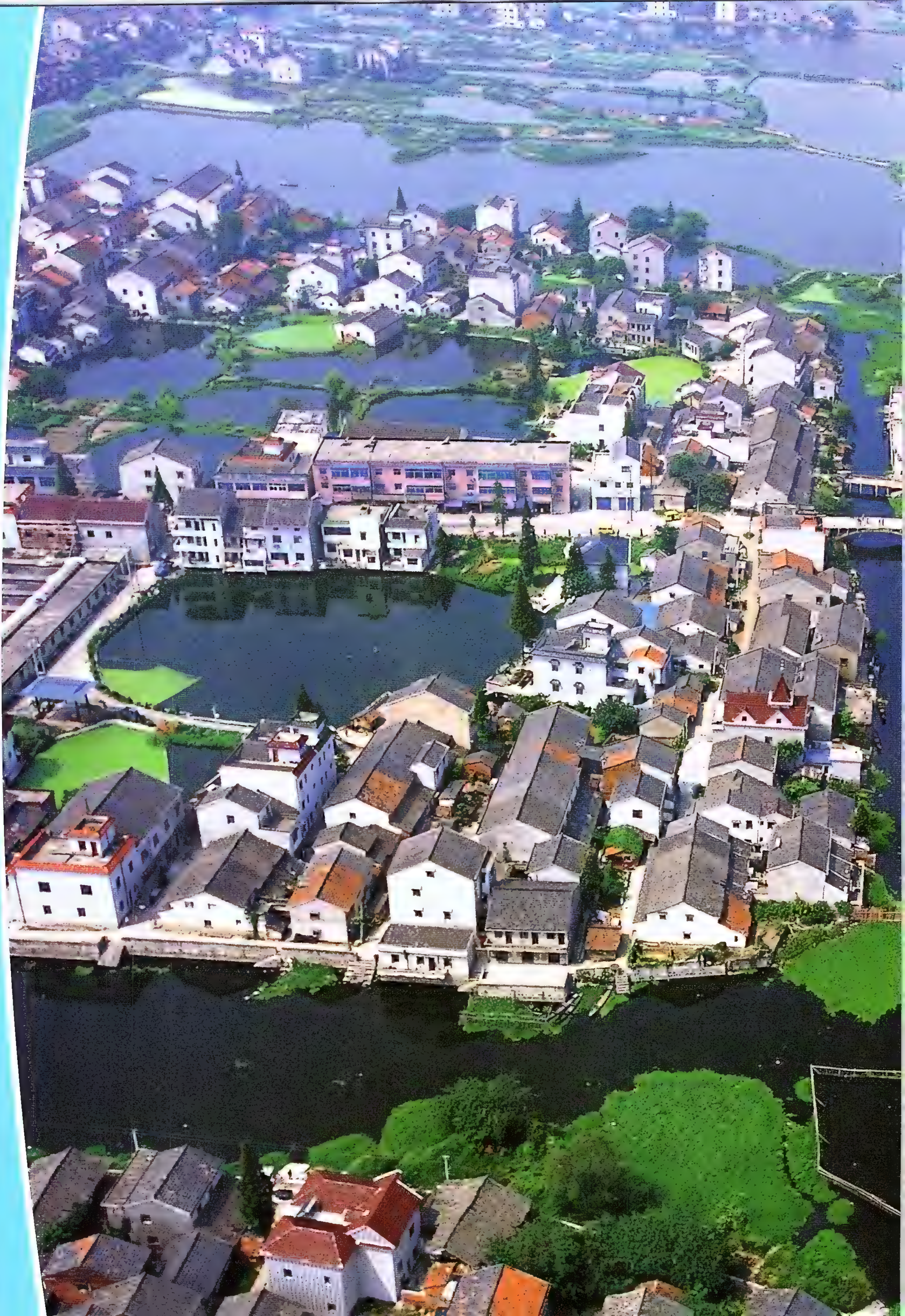
Photos & Article by Xie Guanghui

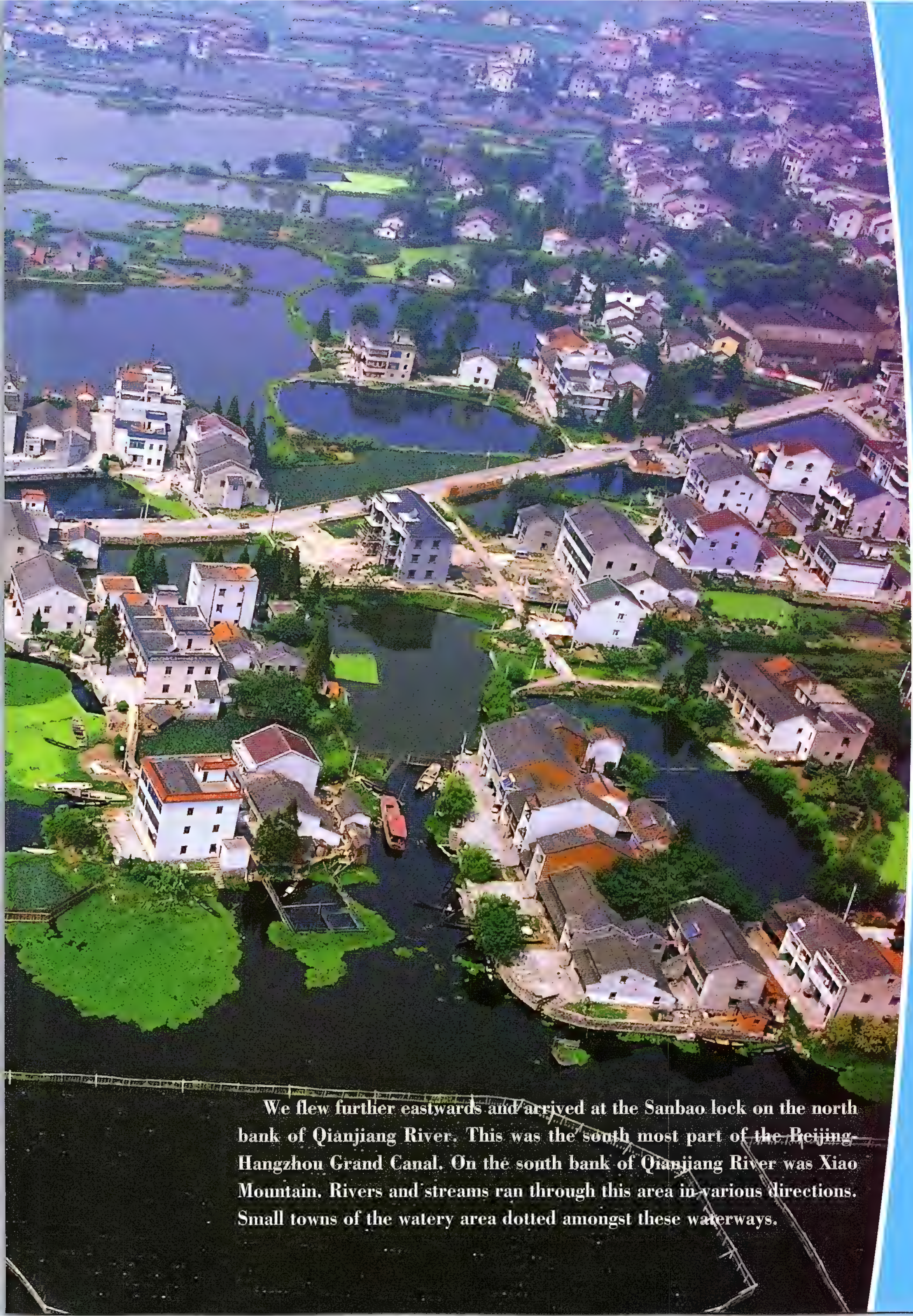




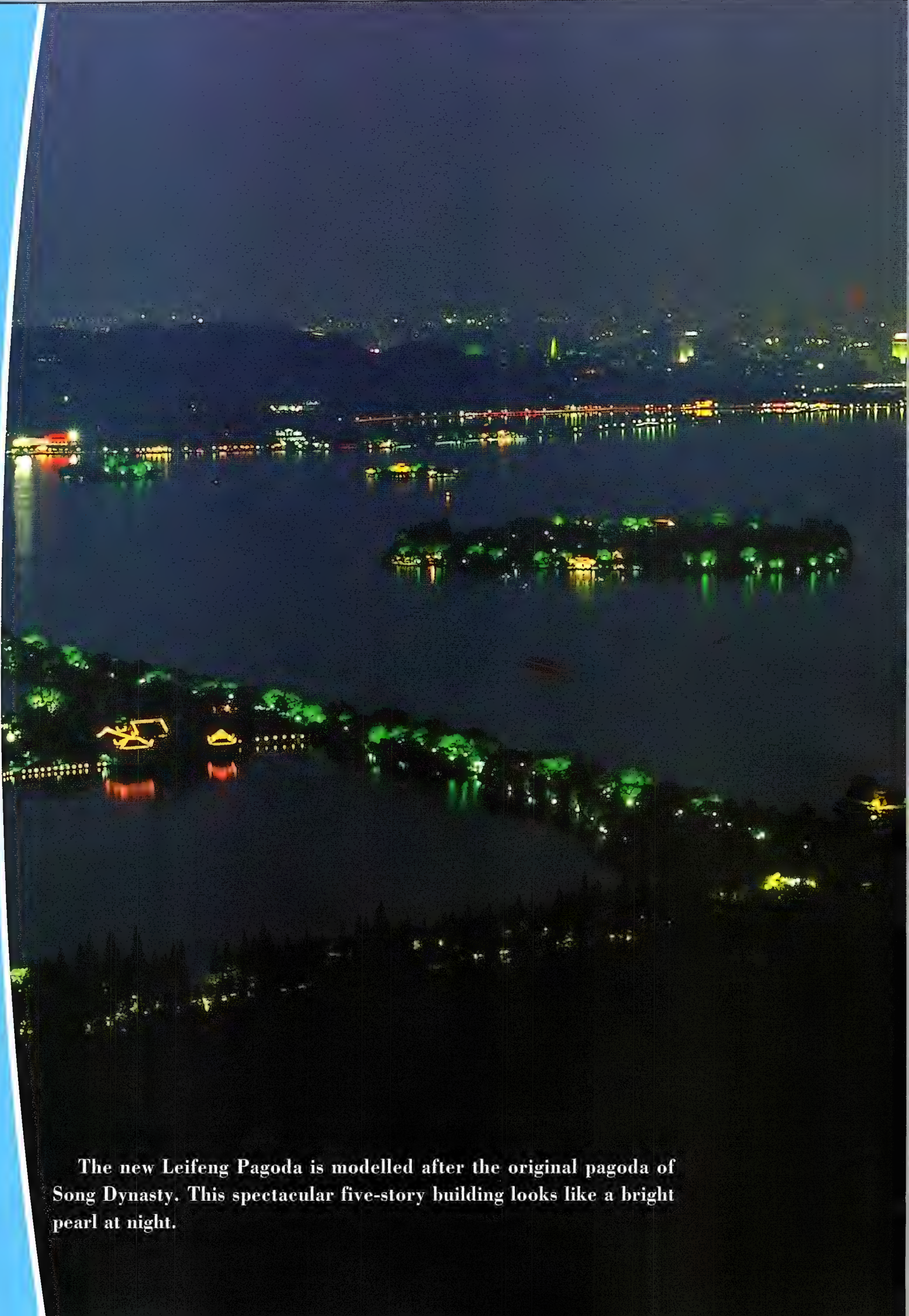


Soon, our helicopter was above the Grand Canal at downtown Hangzhou. Ancient architecture of southern China style was well maintained on the left side of Gongchen Bridge while new building crowded on the other side. It was a sharp contrast.

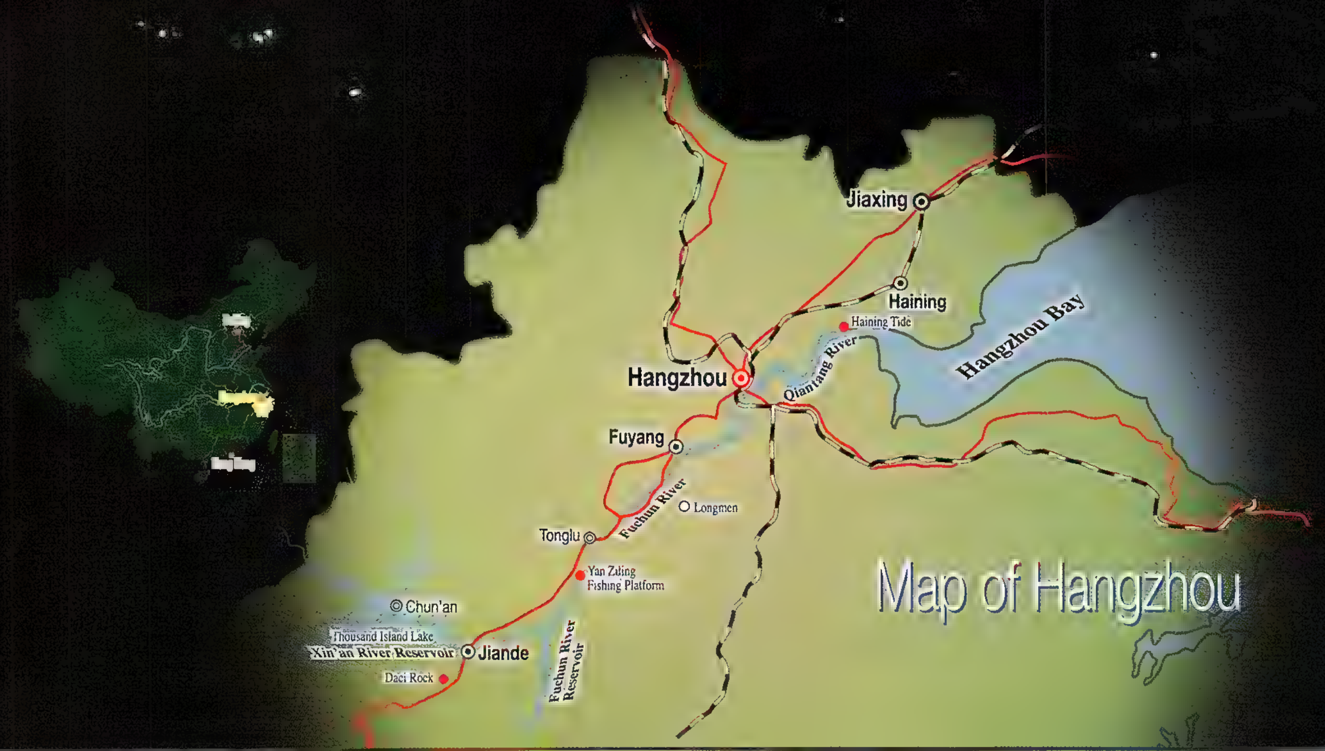




We flew further eastwards and arrived at the Sanbao lock on the north bank of Qianjiang River. This was the south most part of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal. On the south bank of Qianjiang River was Xiao Mountain. Rivers and streams ran through this area in various directions. Small towns of the watery area dotted amongst these waterways.



The new Leifeng Pagoda is modelled after the original pagoda of Song Dynasty. This spectacular five-story building looks like a bright pearl at night.



Map of Hangzhou

Jiaxing
Haining
Haining Tide
Hangzhou Bay
Hangzhou
Qiantang River
Fuyang
Fuchun River
Longmen
Tonglu
Yan Ziling Fishing Platform
Chun'an
Thousand Island Lake
Xin'an River Reservoir
Jiande
Daci Rock
Fuchun River Reservoir

Through the Locals' Eyes

Liang Meiling

Janitor

"I had worked in Hangzhou for 13 years since I came here from the countryside. At that time my salary was only ¥165 a month. Since people used to pay 20 cents each time they used the toilet, I made an extra ¥10 per day. In 2002, Hangzhou City cancelled the charges for public toilets and renovated many of the toilets. Now, this toilet has two floors, a cloakroom, a mirror, a liquid soap dispenser, an automatic hand drier and IR sensor flusher. Also, a toilet for the handicapped and a baby cot have been added later. In 2004, the Fengqi Road Toilet was awarded the Top Ten Public Toilets. My current monthly salary is ¥1,200 Yuan, which is eight times more than before."

"In the past few years, Hangzhou cuisines have become very popular all around China but its development in its origin — Hangzhou — has actually slowed down. Now the Zheng Gongfu was gradually accepted by Hangzhou people mainly because people are tired of oily food with a lot of MSG, while the steamed food made by Zheng Gongfu can keep the original taste of the food."

Ge Baihao

General manager of Zheng Gongfu Restaurant

Feng Caiyun

Retired

"After the Xihu Lake was renovated, the best news is that the admission tickets for all the parks inside the Xihu Lake Scenic Area had been lifted. The senior citizens who come to Xihu Lake daily to play shadow boxing and practice sword dance are especially excited. Though the government has ¥60 million dollars less in park revenue, but the tourists have increased and they have spent over ¥70 million dollars."

"I have 20 years of driving experience. Ten years ago, I left the public transportation company and started to drive taxi. The first one I drove was a Xiali, then changed to a Volkswagen Santana. Three years ago, taxis in Hangzhou began to be replaced by high-class vehicles such as Passat, Bora, Santana and Picasso. So I changed to a Passat, then a Benz. I'm quite lucky to drive a Mercedes Benz taxi."

Chen Jin

Works for the Foreign Affairs Car Travel Service (a driver of the first batch of Mercedes Benz taxis)

Gan Xiaowen

Designer of Hangzhou Urban Construction Design Institute

"The price of housing in Hangzhou is one of the highest in China, just after Shanghai and Beijing. It is due to the strong economy and good living environment. However, there is no landmark architecture here. There is a lack of notable architects to participate in large-scale construction projects. Unfortunately, Hangzhou is lagging behind Shanghai and Beijing in this area."

"In the recent years, Xihu Lake had the most changes in Hangzhou. There are renovations and reconstruction on the Leifeng Pagoda, Yang Gong Dyke, and Xihu Lake. The scenery in Hangzhou is getting more and more pleasant. Every day, more and more people come here to take pictures, and their equipments are very sophisticated: 4X5 Linhafu, 120 Hasselblad and 135 Laika, etc. The International Leisure Expo will be held in Hangzhou in 2006. At that time, there will be more contests for photographers."

Fang Guoliang

Photographer

"Hangzhou is a famous cultural city and has a strong cultural atmosphere. In 2004, the art auction market in China flourished a lot. Works of modern artists such as Wu Guanzhong, Li Keran and Lu Yanshao can be sold at prices of up to ¥10 million. Among the collectors, many are private enterprise owners."

Deng Wenlong

Owner of the Shanghaixing Art Gallery

"The spending power of local youngsters, especially female, is quite high. There used to be no high-class shops in Hangzhou and people need to go to Shanghai or Hong Kong in order to shop for high-class commodities. Recently, many international brand name shops such as Lane Crawford and LV have opened up in Hangzhou. They are too expensive for common people, but this is a sign of change in our expenditure level."

Zhang Xiaoyi

Department manager of China Telecom Hangzhou Company

iang Shengli

Journalist of Zhejiang Youth Times

"As an excellent tourist city of China, public transportation in Hangzhou has developed rapidly these years. In particular, many tunnels have been built around the Xihu Lake Scenic Area one after another to ensure the smooth traffic in the area."

In the recent years, Hangzhou has been promoted as an Oriental Leisure City. Many elegant and trendy places have been built. Through the delicate reformation of five years, the area of the Xihu Lake (West Lake) has expanded by one-sixth and is now more attractive than ever.

One of the greatest scenic routes here is to travel from Hangzhou Bay along the Qiantang lake, pass Fuchun River and Xin'an River and finally arrive at the Thousand Island Lake. These three rivers and two lakes integrate the scenic, cultural and historical elements of Hangzhou.

Hangzhou

After exiting the Hangzhou Train Station, my first impression was the black Mercedes Benz taxis. Among the busy traffic stream, we could hardly find any cheap taxis that were normally seen in Chinese cities.

Groups of well-dressed tourists got into taxis and headed straight to the Xihu Lake, which was close to the train station and city centre.

At the turn of the 21st century, the population in Hangzhou city proper reached 3.93 million and the city area expanded to 3,068 km^2. There were over 10 million domestic and overseas tourists visiting Hangzhou annually in the past few years. The 5.68-km^2 Xihu Lake was packed, and the crowds lessened a great deal of scenic area. More worryingly, the sewage discharged daily was polluting the environment. Therefore, the municipal government of Hangzhou had announcement a three-year plan to clean up the lake for the people again.

The Thousand-year-old Xihu Lake

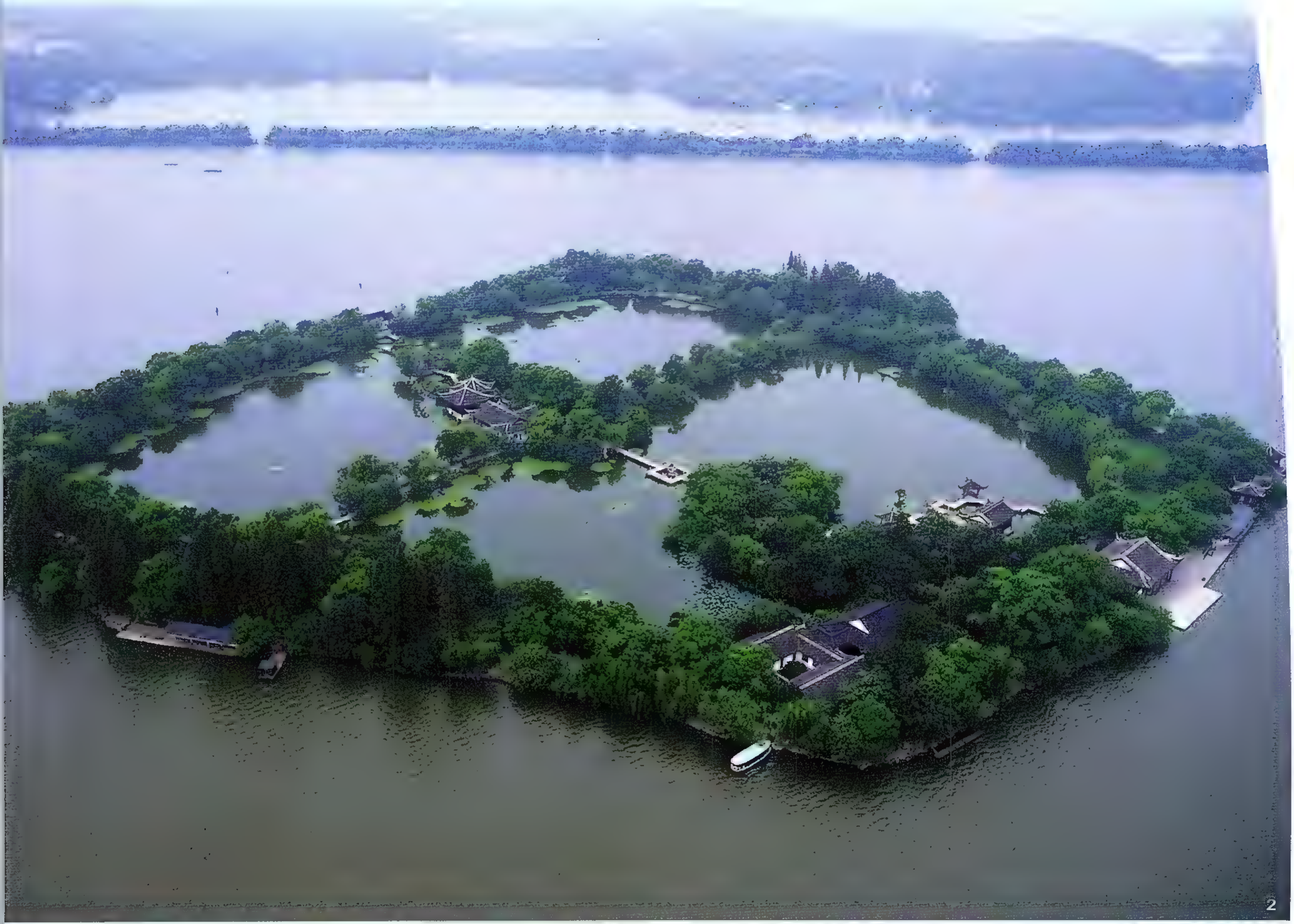
There had been three dredging and harnessing projects done on the Xihu Lake in the past. Each project left a dyke after its completion. As a result, the local residents named the dykes after the governors as Bai Dyke, Su Dyke and Yanggong Dyke.

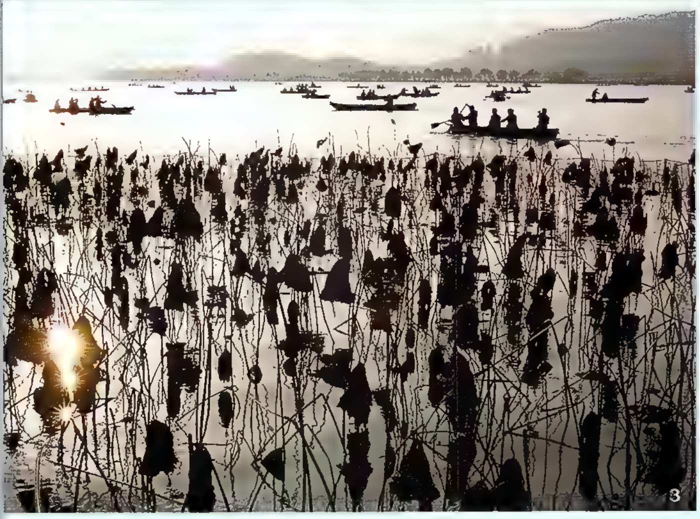
In 822 A.D., Bai Juyi, poet of Tang Dynasty, took office as the governor of Hangzhou. At seeing the serious silt problems in the Xihu Lake, he led the people to dig out the silt and built a long dyke, which could help reserve water for irrigation in dry seasons. The later generations called this the "Bai Dyke".

In 1090, when Su Dongpo, the eminent writer of Song Dynasty, was the governor for Hangzhou, the Xihu Lake dried up due to poor maintenance. Therefore, Su Dongpo called on the people to dredge out the silt and built the southern and northern long dykes. This not only improved the transportation but also added onto the beautiful scenery of the Xihu Lake. So people called it the "Su Dyke".

In 1503, when Yang Mengying of the Song Dynasty was the governor of Hangzhou, the silt problem of Xihu Lake was compounded with illegal occupation of magnates. Yang Mengying followed suit and dredged up the Xihu Lake, and he also put part of the silt onto the Su Dyke to expand it. Willow trees were also planted on the dyke. Therefore, the charming scenery known as "six bridges among the willow trees in the mist" was restored on the Su Dyke. On the other hand, a new dyke was built on the area from Qixia Ridge to Nanshan Road and ran along with the Su Dyke. The new dyke was then called "Yanggong Dyke". Unfortunately, the Xihu Lake was dredged up again briefly, and a report was sent to the emperor accusing Yang Mengying of mishandling government's fund. Therefore, Yang lost his office.

Up till the early years of the Republic of China, the two sides of the Xihu Lake were turned into cultivable lands. Industry was advocated at that time, so the willow trees on the Su Dyke were cut down and mulberry trees were planted, leaving only a narrow path. Later, as the road was built around the Xihu Lake, smooth traffic was restored on the six bridges on Su Dyke. The abandoned Yanggong Dyke was then renamed as Xishan Road.





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4

1. The Jade Belt Bridge on the Xihu Lake connects the Su Dyke and Quyuan Fenghe scenic spot.
2. Xiao Ying Zhou was one of the ten scenic spots in Hangzhou. There were islands on the lake while lakes on the islands. Pavilions, stages, flowers and trees spread around the area, which should be well entitled to be a classis work on watery gardening landscape in the area to the south of the Yangtze River.
3. On a sunny and nice day in deep fall in Hangzhou, people love to rent boats in groups to sail around the Xihu Lake.
4. A large-scale advertisement board on a street in Hangzhou about the watery area Xitang

Free up the Lake Area for the People

In 2003, the Yanggong Dyke was restored and more than 80 ha of water area was created on the west side, expanding the lake area by one-sixth. Some areas of interest were added. The cultural relics such as the former residences of historical famous figures were again reappeared to the public. These made the new Xihu Lake a scenic area full of elegant temperament of watery area of south of the Yangtze River.

Freeing up the lake was far more complicated than building a new Xihu Lake. There used to be many bounding walls around the Xihu Lake and the gate was guarded by gunned soldiers. At one time, several curious youngsters had attempted to sneak into the area by a small boat, but before their boat approached the site, several soldiers seemed to show up from nowhere ordered them to leave. It turned out this area had a military headquarter and a boarding hostel for key officials.

The three-billion-yuan move proceeded with great difficulties. A single order issued by the city government apparently would not force out the military headquarters. According to one of the workers who participated in the move, many coordination meetings were held and some of them even involved the central government. Eventually, the military offices were moved out and the government hostel was renovated into a public hotel. The whole project repositioned 125 units and 933 households in the Yanggong Dyke scenic area alone. Six thousand residents had to move out and over 270,000 m² of illegal constructions or obstructions were pulled down. In return, a total of over 800,000 m² of green land was introduced to the area.

連卡佛
Salvatore Ferragamo
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For most tourists, touring by electro mobile is convenient enough. One can flag down an electro mobile by the lakeside. There is a tour guide who gives talks during the 1.5 hours trip. Visitors who long for freedom can also rent a bicycle or a boat.

The Trendy Xihu Land

Many youngsters in Hangzhou nowadays like to go to Xihu Land. This place and Shanghai's Xintiandi are twin sisters, both built by the same company in Hong Kong. While Xintiandi is a building that combines both the old-fashioned and ultramodern chic, Xihu Land captures the essence of the gorgeous Xihu Lake.

The Xihu Land is on Nanshan Road, and it occupies an area of 50,000 m². Its design is based on Xihu Lake landscape and its surrounding historical architectures. The interior of the building is gray, with various steel structures and huge glasses. Each building has gray bricks and black tiles, and the area links up with each other by bluestone paths. Screen is used as decoration and bamboo trees are planted outside the windows. At the same time, some old villas have been preserved and renovated. They are turned into Starbucks, Hagen-Daz Ice Cream, VA BENE Italian Restaurant, Bie You Tian Tea and Wine Bar, Fulintang — New Generation, Xihu Land Specialty Shop, Gu Mei Xiu, Baoshi Bakery, etc.

Hangzhou's economic growth has been rising, especially in the sector of real estate, during these few years. In fact, Hangzhou's real estate price is the third most expensive in the country. The real estate price is so high because of its comfortable living environment. The city has been awarded 12 titles such as "National Hygiene City" and "Special Citation of UN-Habitat". In addition, it is due to the blooming economy. In 2003, Hangzhou ranked No. 1 in the World Bank's overall investment environment selection in China. In 2004, it was listed as the top of the Best Commercial Cities in Mainland China by the Forbes Magazine. Out of the 674 billionaires in China, 83 are from Zhejiang, outnumbering all the other provinces.

Paradise on Earth – Highest Life Contentment Index

In 2003, two world famous car manufacturers, Bentley and Porsch, opened their shops on Hubin Road and Nanshan Road. In autumn 2004, La Mer made its first debut in Hangzhou. A bottle of 30-ml facial cream cost ¥1,300 and a 500-ml bottle

1. **The Xihu Lake Land is similar to Xintiandi in Shanghai.**
2. **Bentley opened a showroom in Huibin Xihu Lake Plaza in Hangzhou.**
3. **A fashion show in the plaza**
4. **The bar and cafe street on Nanshan Road in Hangzhou is exotic.**
5. **Lane Crawford opened its business in Hangzhou International Building on Yan'an Road.**
6. **Donghe Highway that runs through the south and north is a trunk line of Hangzhou's transportation.**

A Blissful Escape to
Hangzhou

浙江国际大酒店
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95519
浙江省分公司

LOUIS VUITTON
HANGZHOU TOWER

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cost ¥14,000. Such products show the astonishing purchasing power of women of Hangzhou. On the first day when La Mer became available in Hangzhou, two ladies bought a 500-ml bottle of facial cream each. Another lady spent nearly ¥28,000 on seven bottles of 60-ml facial cream and six bottles of 50-ml lotion.

Hangzhou Mansion Shopping Centre opened up three new counters for Sisley, Anna Sui and Beaute de Kose, and all of them achieved the best sales in China. Of the three, a mere six-square metres counter of Sisley achieved a single day sales of ¥11,000. After that, Lane Crawford and LV also opened up their outlets in Hangzhou. When LV opened in Hangzhou Mansion, a sales of ¥360,000 was achieved in the first two hours. In the five following days, LV did a business of ¥2.5 million. The luxurious brands set up new records of sales in this Paradise on Earth.

A joint survey, done by Observation on Orient Weekly (the news magazine of Xinhua News Agency) in cooperation with professor Xi Kaiyuan (professor of the University of Chicago), presented a life contentment index on six cities. Among Shanghai (monthly income per capita ¥2,589), Beijing (monthly income per capita ¥2,522), Hangzhou (monthly income per capita ¥1,789), Xi'an (monthly income per capita ¥1,531), Wuhan (monthly income per capita ¥1,296) and Chengdu (monthly income per capita ¥1,139), Hangzhou ranked top.

During weekends, there are many private cars with Shanghai number plates appeared at fashionable malls such as Xihu Land. Those who travelled in these cars are well dressed and well mannered. They laugh and talk in their distinct Shanghai dialect, enjoying themselves thoroughly in Hangzhou.

Shanghai is only 180 km from Hangzhou, and it takes an hour or so to drive cross the Huhang Expressway. Taking a train is even more convenient. The journey takes less than two hours and it merely costs ¥26. Shanghai people, who are penny-wise, know that the fresh air in Huangzhou worth much more than the train fare. There is a popular saying: the Xihu Lake is the Laguna of Shanghai people. However, Hangzhou people do not quite agree with that. It is because Hangzhou people are grown up by the Xihu Lake, and they are used to the beautiful lake and mountain sceneries.

The Only Free National Level Scenic Area

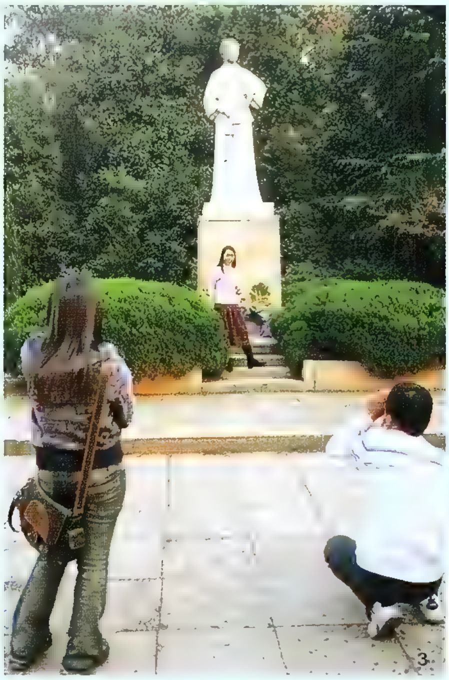
Surely, before the implementation of the comprehensive protection project, a large volume of sewage was discharged directly into the Xihu Lake. The ammonia and nitrogen in the water had exceeded the standard. Hangzhou city was dedicated to improving the water quality in the Xihu Lake. In the recent several years, comprehensive renovation was carried out on all public toilets in Hangzhou, especially those around the Xihu Lake scenic area. And these three-star-hotel-like washrooms are all free of charge. Moreover, Hangzhou city invested another five billion yuan on highways construction.

The admission for key scenic areas such as Jiuzhaigou, Huangshan Mountain, Suzhou Gardening Landscape, Beijing Imperial Palace, and Great Wall, have kept increasing over the years. However, Hangzhou city waives the admission for the parks along the Xihu Lake, and it becomes the only national level scenic area that does not charge admission.

The Souls Rested in Peace

Among the newly restored scenic spots on Beishan Street, there are two tombs, one of Wu Song and other of Wu Xiaoxiao. Wu Song was the hero in the Chinese classic novel Outlaws of the Marsh. Under the narration of the author Shi Nai'an, Wu Song followed Song Jiang and went on a punitive expedition on Fang La and arrived in Hangzhou. He spent his retired life in a temple near Liuhe Pagoda as a monk. It was said

1. **When the huge suitcase of LV was opened in Hangzhou Mansion, a sales of ¥360,000 was achieved in 2 hour.**
2. **The couplet was carved on the stone columns in front of the tomb of Su Xiaoxiao.**
3. **Tourists had their photo taken in front of the Qiu Jin statue by Xiling Bridge.**
4. **The rebuilt Wu Song Tomb**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that during the Guangxu reign in Qing Dynasty, a coffin carved with characters saying "Coffin of Hero Wu Song" was unearthed outside of Yongjin Gate. People considered that to be the coffin of Wu Song and therefore raised fund to have the coffin reburied. Many years later, three big shots, namely Huang Jinrong, Du Yuesheng and Zhang Xiaolin from Shanghai, came here to relocate the tomb by the Xiling Bridge in memorial of Wu.

Coincidentally, the Su Xiaoxiao Tomb was very close to the Wu Song Tomb. Su Xiaoxiao, the famous courtesan of Nanji, was extraordinarily talented and beautiful as well as faithful to love. Her life experience and love story was sad and touching. She was later nicknamed as the Chinese Camellias. It was said that after Su Xiaoxiao died, she was buried here and the late generation built a pavilion above the tomb. Literates and notable figures of different times kept writing articles about her story. Sadly, a Red Guard once destroyed her tomb because prostitution was considered a taboo in the old society.

Qiu Jin Tomb was on the south bank of Xiling Bridge. Qiu Jin was a talented lady. She went to Japan for study in 1904 and joined the Renaissance Association and the Chinese Revolutionary League. After returning to China, she joined the revolutionary forces. In the end, Xu Xilin failed in an attempt to assassinate En Ming, the governor of Anhui. Qiu Jin was then arrested and was executed shortly at Tingkou of Shaoxing. According to the dying wish of Qiu Jin, after several round abuts, her remains were finally buried at the side of Xiling Bridge. Under these circumstances, a famous courtesan and a heroine were buried alongside by the Xiling Bridge.

Former Residence of Beishan Street

Beishan Street was at the foot of Geling Mount at the north bank of the Xihu Lake. During the Republic of China, many notable politicians, businessmen and men of letters had their villas built here. Climbing up to the Baoshi Peak along a small stairway behind Beishan Street, the view suddenly broadened up. A long and thin Bai Dyke split the Xihu Lake into two parts. Baoshu Pagoda and Leifeng Pagoda sat on the south and north side respectively. These two pagodas were initially built for the same person, which was the Emperor Qianshu of Wuyue State.

To wish Emperor Qianshu a safe journey home, his family had the Yingtian Pagoda built on the Baoshi Peak on the north side of the Xihu Lake. Soon after the pagoda was built, a monk said that putting a sarira on the top of the pagoda would help prevent disasters. After he said this, he sat down under the tower and burned himself. Therefore his sarira was put on the top of the pagoda as he wished. As a result, Qianshu returned safely. Therefore, people called this pagoda "Baoshu Pagoda".

The reason why Leifeng Pagoda won its fame was mainly through the ancient fairy tale White Snake. The tale was about a monk named Fa Hai, who confined the white snake lady under the Leifeng Pagoda. But according to Xianchun Lin'an Accounts, the Leifeng Pagoda was first built in the 5th year of the Kaibao reign in Song Dynasty (972 A.D.). Emperor Qianshu built this pagoda to show his gratitude to the Buddha as his queen delivered a son for him. Originally the pagoda was in brick and wooden structure. During the Jiajing reign in Ming Dynasty, a fire completely burned down the outer wooden corridor structure and only the brick pagoda centre was left. The ruins were enlisted by the Qianlong Emperor as one of the Ten Scenic Spots of the Xihu Lake.

One afternoon in the September of 1924, the Leifeng Pagoda collapsed. Later, there was controversial on whether it should be rebuilt. And since Leifeng Pagoda in Sunset was one of the ten famous sceneries of the Xihu Lake, people eventually agreed on reconstruction. In September 2002, the new Leifeng Pagoda was built on the site of the Wu Yuan ancient pagoda. The new pagoda was in steel structure and there was a large amount of copper material used for decoration. The external part appeared ancient but the core building was brand new. There were four sightseeing elevators installed inside the pagoda.

New Hubin Pedestrian Street

Coming down from the Mount Baoshi, I walked along the Xihu Lake for more than 10 minutes before arriving at the new Hubin pedestrian street. Hefang Street is also called Qing He Fang. It is the only well preserved ancient street in Hangzhou. On this street, there were shops with a history of over a hundred years such as Hu Qingyu Tang Traditional Chinese Medicine Shop and Wanlong Ham, as well as many western style architectures left from the 1920s and 1930s.

The Nansong Dynasty set its capital in Hangzhou. The Royal Palace was built on the Phoenix Mountain behind this street. In the fairy tale White Snake, Xu Xian walked out of the Baohe Medicine Shop on Qing He Fang and met lady White Snake on a broken bridge, thus started the well known love story that was told for thousands of years. In Ming and Qing dynasties, Qing He Fang was the busiest commercial centre. After 1949, the city centre of Hangzhou kept moving towards Wulin Gate, and Hubin direction and Qing He Fang gradually quieted down. After decades of silence, it became busy again and was exhibiting the prosperity of Hangzhou in the past.

After leaving Qing He Fang, we walked uphill along a stone stairway and arrived at the Chenghuang Mountain. This is one of the favourite places for the elders in Hangzhou. Besides bringing their pet birds to the two scenic spots on the mountain, namely the grand camphor trees and the Chenghuang Court, they also enjoy having morning tea, singing opera, dancing, as well as playing cards and chess there. Seven or eight of the camphor trees at the mountain were planted several hundred years ago. The tallest one is about six stories tall. The biggest one is outside the Chenghuang Court. The root is stuck to the stone walls. The sky-scraping greenery gives out a pleasant natural fragrance. Climbing up to Chenghuang Court and looking afar, one can see the Xihu Lake in the west and Qianjiang River to the south. The whole Hangzhou City is all in the view.

1. **Hangzhou was awarded 12 titles such as National Hygiene City, Special Citation of UN-Habitat and International Garden City. This is the high-class villa area in the west part of Hangzhou.**
2. **The Hu Qing Yu Tang located on He Fang Street of Hangzhou and near the Wushan Mountain was established in 1874. Along with the Tong Ren Tang of Beijing, the two shops are called the old medicine shop of south and north China.**
3. **Qing He Fang is an ancient street in Hangzhou.**

Haining

Qiantang River that runs through Hangzhou originates at the border between Anhui and Jiangxi provinces near the Huanyu Mountain. It flows from the west to the east into Hangzhou Bay. In the upstream, the section from Tunxi in Anhui Province to Jiande Meicheng in Hangzhou is called Xin'an River. In the mid stream, the section from Meichang to Xiaoshan Wenjiayan is called Fuchun River. In the downstream, the part from Wenjiayan to Hangzhou Bay was called Qiantang River. The total length was 605 km.

The Grand Qiantang River Tide

Qiantang River is famous for its tide. The customs of watching the tide started in Yang Dynasty and had been carried on to present. Normally people only know that the Qiantang River Tide appears on the 15th~18th day of the eighth month in Chinese lunar calendar. In fact, Qiantang River Tide can be seen every day in every season. Every 15th day of the lunar months at noon, the tide comes on time at exactly a month interval without exception. The pushing hand behind this is the gravitational force of the moon, which is twice a day. The reason why the Qiantang River Tide is so extraordinary was mainly due to the special geographical environment of Hangzhou Bay. The over 100-km wide Hangzhou Bay mouth shrinks to 20 km at Ganpu, then suddenly to three kilometers at Yuanguan Town in Haining City. The section is wide outside and narrow inside like a trumpet shape. When the tidal wave comes, a large volume of seawater runs into the Qiantang River rapidly from the sea. As the tide narrows by the banks, it stores a huge amount energy that goes against the river stream, and such high rising waves become a wonder in the world.

The grand tide can be seen along the whole section from Yanguan of Haining to Jiuxi of Hangzhou. However, the most famous point should be Yanguan of Haining. The Qianlong Emperor of Qing Dynasty as well as famous figures such as Sun Yet-sen and Mao Zedong had been here to watch the tide.

Wherever the tide passes, everything is turned up and down and the tide looks as if it would engulf the whole world. Apart from Yanguan Town of Haining City, Lao Yan Cang and Meinu Dyke in Xiaoshan are also good viewpoints. Lao Yan Cang is

located at the first bay of Qiangjiang River. The fierce tidal waves encounter here for the first time and they create bigger waves by rolling itself about.

Meinu Dyke of Xiaoshan is the second bay on Qiantang River. The tidal waves hit the hard dyke for the second time and back off a bit and hit it again. The splendid scene of "two returns of one tide" can be seen. In the recent years, the tidal wave in the section from Liuhe Pagoda in Hangzhou to Jiuxi seemed to have grown stronger year by year. It takes about two and a half hours for the tide to run from Yanguan to Jiuxi.

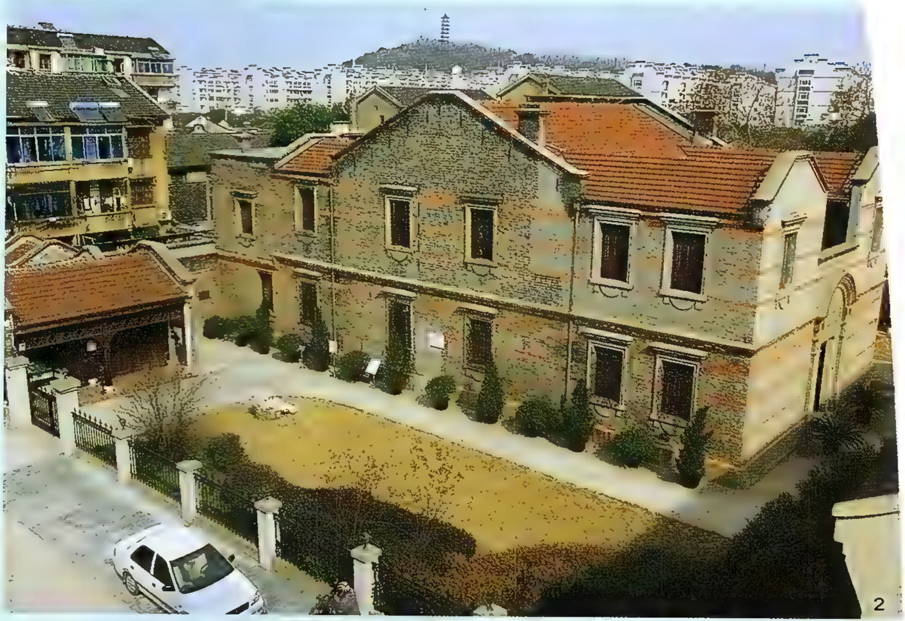
Autumn is the best time to see the tide wave of Qiantang River. The moon's gravitational force reaches the peak during 15th~18th of the eighth month of the Chinese lunar calendar, and the tidal wave then is the strongest.

Hometown of Talented Scholars

Haining was endowed with talents and natural resources. There were many famous cultural figures born in Haining, such as Wang Guowei, poet Xu Zhimo and the famous martial art novelist Jin Yong. The former residence of Wang Guowei was located at Zhou Jia Dou of Yanguan Town. It was a courtyard-style architecture of brick and wood. Wang Guowei had outstanding achievements in literature, opera, history study, philosophy and archaeology, and he was reputed as the creator of new history study. The residence exhibited books, papers, manuscripts, rubbings and photos of Wang Guowei's works. And there was also a tidy small garden behind the building.

Poet Xu Zhimo was 19 years younger than Wang Guowei. He was born into a family of a wealthy merchant in Haining. Xu Zhimo studied overseas in the U.K. and U.S.A. in his young age and returned to teach in Beijing and Shanghai. He was a member of the "New Moon Association" and was the editor-in-chief of the "New Moon Monthly". On 19 November 1931, he died in an air accident. The former residence of Xu Zhimo was located on Ganhe Street, Xiashi Town, Haining City. It was a lime and brick structure building integrating Chinese and western styles that Xu Shenru built for Xu Zhimo for his wedding in 1926. The architectural style looked like the Shiku Gate in Shanghai.

The former residence of Jin Yong was in Yuanhua Town of Haining. It had white walls and black tiles. The walls were very high. The area was bigger than the former residence of Xu Zhimo. The whole residence was managed by Jin Yong's relatives in his hometown and was opened to the public free of charge. According to the villagers, the residence was repaired by the Haining Municipal Government. It was a pity that Mr. Jin Yong had not been there to see it so far.



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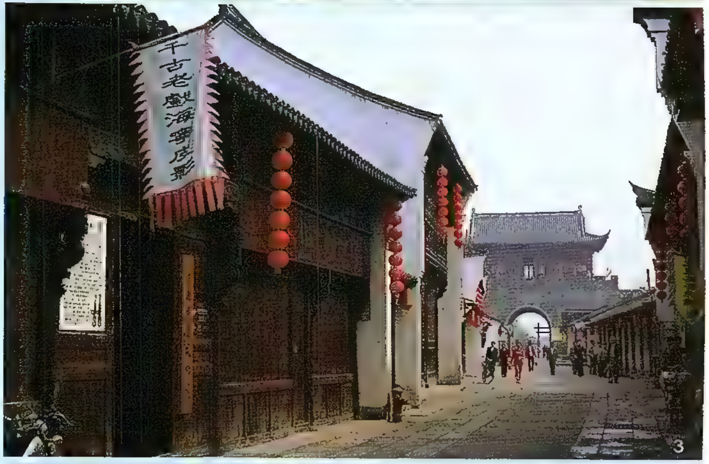

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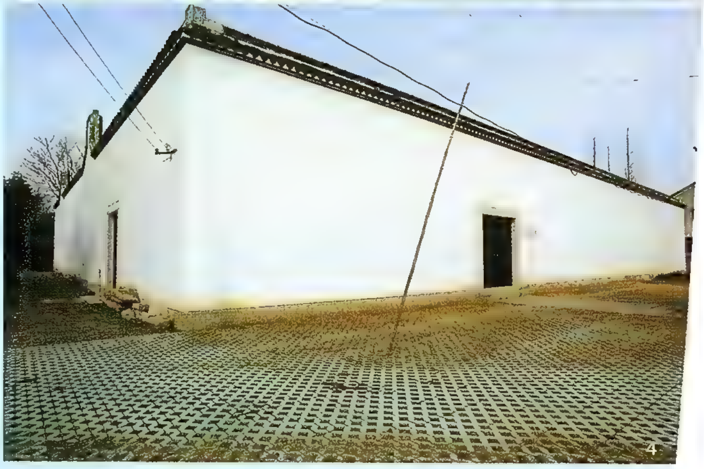

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1. The Qiantang River Tide can be seen in Yanguan of Haining every day.
2. The former residence of Xu Zhimo is located on Ganhe Street, Xiashi Town, Haining City. It is a lime and brick structure building integrating Chinese and western styles that Xu Shenru built for Xu Zhimo for his wedding in 1926.
3. Yanguan ancient town of Haining. Some stories of Jin Yong's Novel took place here.
4. The former residence of Jin Yong is in Yuanhua Town of Haining

Fuyang

Travelling from Yuanhua Town of Haining City southwards, one would reach Hangzhou Bay soon. Travelling further westwards along the north bank of Qiangtang River through Yanguan Town, Qiaosi, then Liuhe Pagoda, the river flowed peacefully. Barges that transported sand and stone lined up closely one after one just like water snakes swimming on the river. The rice fields on both of the banks looked green on the background of the mountains. When I arrived at Fuyang, I climbed up the Marabou Mountain and looked afar. The river in spring winded its way through my view. Everything just looked like a long landscape painting. The former residence of Yu Dafu was near. Yu Dafu was a famous writer in China's modern history. His works were mostly amorous and sentimental.

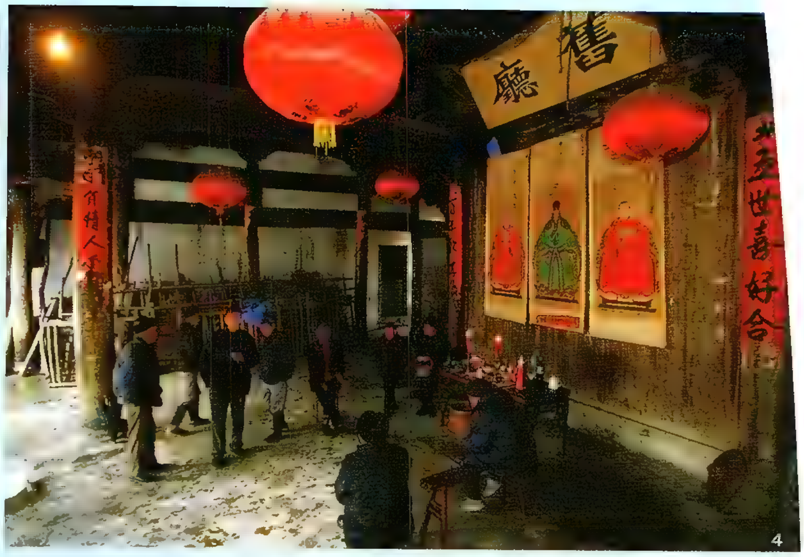
The former residence of Yu Dafu was an individual three-section building. A statue of Yu Dafu at his young age sat in front of the door. On the central wall, there hung a picture of Yu Dafu and his first wife. However, the public was more impressed by his love affair with Wang Yingxia. It was a pity that they eventually broke up.

Former Residence of Sun Quan

I left the Fuyang county town and headed west through the Zhongpu Bridge before I turned into a countryside road. After about 10 minutes' ride, I arrived at the foot of the Longmen Mountain which was the ending section of Xianxia Ridge on the south bank of Fuchun River. It was said that the famous figure Yan Ziling of Dong Han Dynasty toured this place and sighed at the beautiful scenery of the mountain and water: "As beautiful as Luliang Longmen (the Longmen Gorge on the Yellow River and also belonged to the Luliang Mountains in the south of Shanxi Province)." Therefore the town was named Longmen Town.

But what actually made Longmen Town famous was the Sun family that lasted for thousands of years. During the Warring Kingdoms Period, the militarist Sun Wu met with the Wu King He Lu and presented his 13 chapters of Military Science, and was appointed as general. He led the Wu army and took over the Chu Kingdom. Sun Ming, who was Sun Wu's son, was entitled as "Fuchun Marquis" due to his father's contributions. That was the origin of the Sun's families in Fuyang. However, the most notable figures among the Sun families was Sun Quan; he ruled the Wu Kingdom during the Three Kingdoms period. Sun Quan, also named Zhongmou, was from Fuyang. He followed his elder brother Sun Ce in the battles in the Jiangdong area when he was only 15. After Sun Ce died, Sun Quan ascended the throne with assistance by Zhang Zhao and Zhou Yu. He established the Wu Kingdom in 229 A.D. and formed the three rival situations with the Wei Kingdom established by Cao Pi and the Shu Kingdom established by Liu Bei. This period was called the Three Kingdoms Period. When the Wu Kingdom collapsed, some of the Sun families migrated outside to Luoyang, Jiangsu and Jiangxi. The Sun family who stayed in Fuyang Longmen has a history of over 1,200 years.

There were 2,600 households in the Longmen ancient town with a total population of over 7,000 persons, over 90% of whom had the family name as Sun. It was the biggest village in the area in south of the Yangtze River and the biggest habitat of the Sun's descendants. The Sun's clan temple was the biggest architecture in that ancient town. As Sun Quan had established his kingdom in the history, the Sun's descendants were all proud of having such an ancestor. The grandest architecture in Longmen should be Yi Gate, which was built during the Jiajing reign in Ming Dynasty. The owner Sun Chao was the wealthiest man in the seven counties of that area. However, he lived a plain and simple life and was very committed to charity. He once paid the grain levy to the emperor on behalf of the village in a serious drought year and was therefore highly praised by the later generations.



Blood Vessel of the Sun's Families

Generally speaking, Longmen Town integrated the architectural styles of different periods ranging from Ming Dynasty to modern China. These residential compounds reflected the status of habitants in ancient times. There were several branches of Sun's families in Longmen Town, and they lived in halls and houses. A public hall served as the clan temple for a small family. Rooms with tall walls were built around the main hall to form an enclosed compound for a Sun family branch. Among the main halls, the walls and eaves linked to each other and corridors and rooms also connected. I felt like walking in a maze when walked in the spider-web like narrow lanes and ancient streets paved with cobblestones, and I also felt that I entered into the blood vessels of the Sun's family.

From the 1st to the 18th day of the first month in Chinese lunar calendar, pictures of ancestors should be hung up in every main halls in Longmen Town. These pictures had a long history and the paper had turned yellowish, but the figures were still in sharp colours. The painting colours used were mineral colours. In a hall called "Old Hall", there hung three pictures with vertical shafts. The senior members of the family would place offerings on the table, burn the sandalwood incense sticks and red candles, and hang lanterns and Spring Festival couplets. Furthermore, the pictures of ancestors needed to be hung up till the 18th day of the month before they were stored for one year in turns by the households. Storing the pictures of ancestors was a great responsibility and a great honour.

1. Peaceful Fuchun River at sunrise. Fishermen started their new day. The scenery was extraordinary charming. (by Wang Tian Rui)

2,3. The former residence of Yu Dafu is located at 1 Dafu Lane, Fuchun Road, Fuyang.

4. From the 1st to the 18th day of the first month in Chinese lunar calendar, pictures of ancestors would be hung up in every main halls in Longmen Town. These pictures has a long history and the paper has turned yellowish.

5. The former residence of Sun Quan of the Three Kingdoms Period is located at Fuyang Longmen ancient town on the south bank of Fuchun River.

Tonglu

Travelling up along Fuchun River took me to Tonglu, where the fishing platform of Yan Ziling was located.

It was located at 18 km in the southwest of the county seat and was the most famous scenic spot on Fuchun River. The Yang Ziling Fishing Platform could not be reached by road. Taking a boat was the only option. The beautiful scenery of Fuchu River was best when appreciated from a boat. The ride was quiet and transquil.

Yan Ziling Fishing Platform

Yan Ziling was from Huixi of Zhejiang Province. He became famous when he was young. He was the schoolmate of Liu Xiu. After Liu Xiu became the Guangwu Emperor of the Dong Han Dynasty, Yan Ziling changed his name and lived a reclusion life. Emperor Liu Xiu had asked him to be an official for several times, but Yan Guang turned down the offer. Instead, he lived a reclusion life in the Fuchun Mountain. The later generations admired his noble personality very much.

When our boat docked at the wharf, I walked through the

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decorated archway and climbed up the mountain along the winding stone stairway until I reached a stone pavilion. There I discovered a high raised platform around 100 m in height. That was the east and west fishing platforms. The eastern one was the Yan Ziling Fishing Platform.

Looking down from the fishing platform, there were sheer cliffs with dense vegetation on both sides of the Fuchun River. The blue water in the river looked like a jade belt. There was a temple of Yan Ziling at the foot of the fishing platform, but due to the construction of Fuchun River Hydropower Plant, it submerged into the river. The clan temple I visited was rebuilt in 1983.

Jiangnan Suspended Temple

In Ming and Qing Dynasties, Anhui merchants from southern Anhui Province shipped a large amount of tea, timber, Anhui ink, Xuan paper from Tunxi Wharf in Anhui through the waterway along Xin'an River, Fuchun River and Qiantang River all the way down to Hangzhou. The cargos shipped from Hangzhou to Huizhou were silk, horses and daily items. In the past, when the ships travelled downstream, they could travel for as far as 50 km a day, but they could only rely on wind or manpower when travelling upstream. Since Qili Long Canyon was enclosed by mountains and the river surface was very narrow, the ships could travel very fast in a smooth sail. But a windless day would make sailing difficult.

Later on, the Anhui-Hangzhou highway was opened to public, and the waterway transportation was abandoned gradually. In recent years, Fuchun specialty tours were developed and the Qili Sail Scenery was restored as a tourist attraction.

Walking further in the southwest direction through Jiande City led me to the Daci Rock known as Jiannan Suspended Temple. As recorded: During the Dada reign of Yuan Dynasty (1297~1307 A.D.), the creator of this temple Mo Ziyuan left his home in Lin'an and travelled here according to the route indicated by his dream. Mo then carved out the stone for a Buddha statue and built the Daci Temple on the side of the cliff. The main part of Daci Temple included the Dizangwang Hall which was three metres tall, 60 m long and 30 m wide, half of it was inserted into the rocks and the other half was suspended in the air. Looking down by the handrails made one feel "as if the rock under the foot were to crack up". Seen from below at the foot if the mountain, it also looked very dangerous but grand. It had a similar impression as the suspended temple in Hengshan Mountain in Shanxi Province. Apart from the plank road built along a cliff and long corridor, an elevated cable car way had also been built for Daci Temple, and an upper air racing performance was given. A newly built steel chain bridge brought even more excitement and fun to tourists.

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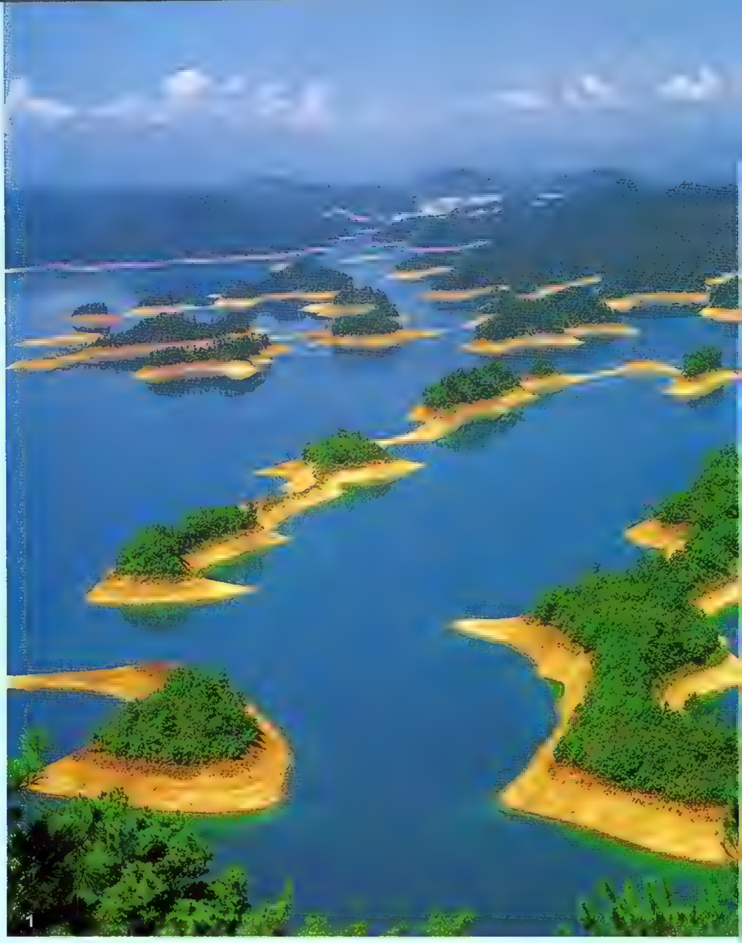
1. Jiande Daci Rock is also called "Jiangnan Suspension Temple".
2. Yan Ziling Fishing Platform scenic area on the bank of Fuchun River at Tonglu (Photo by Ma Yuanhao)
3. The country scenery of the south of the Yangtze River on both banks of Fuchun River (by Wang Miao)
4. The bamboo raft drifting on Jingshan Shuangxi in Yuhang attracted many people to leave the city and enjoy the fun among the waters and mountains.
5. The scenery of Qili Long Canyon on Fuchun River

Chun'an

When I arrived at Chun'an, also known as "a city of lakes and mountainous scenery", I was in awed by the vast Thousand Islands Lake. The green island looked like golden belts dotted in the beautiful lake. The whole scenery was just amazing.

Transforming the Mountains into Islands

I got in a speedboat at the cruise wharf. The water in the lake was very clear but I could not see the bottom of the lake as it was too deep. The average depth was 30 m and some area could be as deep as 100 m. The Thousand Islands Lake was the last man-made lake after the Xin'an River Reservoir was built. The 1,078 islands here used to be the peaks of mountains. After the Xin'an River Reservoir dykes were built, the depth of the water was over 100 m, and all the surrounding mountains were turned into islands. Xin'an River Hydropower Plant was the first large-scale hydropower plant designed and built by China. On 21 September of 1959, the reservoir began to store water. The villages and fields of Chun'an below the altitude of 108 m, including five ancient towns with a history of over a thousand year, 49 townships, 1,377 villages and 20,000 ha of field and residential area, were flooded a few months later. Two hundred and ninety thousand of residents had to leave and began their long and hard journey of migration.



I then went to Longshan Island. I got onto the wharf and climbed up the stairs to the Hairui Temple. It had a red gate, multi-layers of eaves, carved beams and painted columns. Hairui was a praiseworthy official of Ming Dynasty who dedicated his life to punishing malfeasants. When he was the minister, he openly criticised Emperor Jiajing for neglecting state affairs and was therefore imprisoned. He was released after the emperor had died. He assumed the post of a Yingtian Governor in 1569 and organised a dredging project on Wusong River. He reformed the taxation system of the Ming Dynasty by combining all miscellaneous duties into a sum of silver coins instead of real goods. Later he was elbowed out by Zhang Juzhong and lived in leisure for 16 years after he was dismissed.

He again took office as the official in the Ministry of Official Personal Affairs in 1585 and he died at the age of 73.

Building a Temple for Hairui

Hairui Temple was temple built by the local residents of Chun'an voluntarily. The fact that people built a temple for him reflected his importance. In fact, Hairui was the governor of Chun'an County for four years only, which was not a long time. However, in that limited period of time, he did many good deeds for the people, such as lessened tax, straightened up the government official team and combated local tyrants. He was admired during his whole life as an official. When he left the post, the local people built a temple for him.

In the 1950s, the Xin'an River Reservoir was built and the old temple submerged in the water. The Chun'an people had been wishing to rebuild the Hairui Temple. Until the 80s, the Hairui Temple was finally rebuilt. It consisted of three halls and two courtyards in brick and wooded structure. A statue of Hairui and some stone tablets carved with Hairui's calligraphy were placed in the temple.

Underwater Adventure

The thousand-year-old ancient city is still well preserved under the water today. It is constantly monitored by divers and experts.

To expand tourism, the local government specially built a sightseeing submarine. Once it passes the safety test, tourist can go to this underwater world and see the ancient streets and lanes for themselves.

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1. The Thousand Island Lake was the last man-made lake after the Xin'an River Reservoir was built. The 1,078 islands used to be peaks of mountains. (by Wu Zongqi)
2. The Hairui Temple on the Longshan Island on the Thousand Island Lake was built by the civilians in memorial of the honourable Hairui.
3. The Kaiyuan Holiday Villa of the Thousand Island Lake is the ideal holiday inn.
4. A huge chub (by Wu Zongqi)

Fishing in Thousand Island Lake

In the Thousand Island Lake, there were 87 kinds of fresh water fish including chub, herring, carp and crucian. Among them, the bighead carp (also called the bighead) was inexpensive but had a big head and much colloid.

The fish here tasted especially fresh and delicious because of the excellent water quality in the Thousand Island. The lake had a transparent level of over seven metres. Part of the reason was the population of chub. For each kilogram of fish meat increased, a chub needed to consume eight kilograms of alga. This helped lower the nitrogen and phosphor in the water and thus purified the lake. The chub was thus known as the "cleaner" and played an important role of keeping the ecological balance in the Thousand Island Lake.

Fish rested in the scope for one metre to 15 m deep. The Thousand Island Lake fishing team judged the type and amount of fish by listening to the sound of fish jumping. They used a tugboat to put the 3,800-m long and 60-m wide net into the water. A team of tens of people was needed to coordinate their actions.

The physical labour was demanding and a small negligence might break the net and cause the fish to escape. Watching the scene of thousands of fish being captured was amazing. The highest record here was catching 300,000 kg of fish by one single net, with the biggest fish weighing 50.5 kg.

One third of the drinking water of Hangzhou City came from the Thousand Island Lake. However, fishing would not affect the ecology and water quality. Five hundred thousand kilograms of chub and fry was put into the Thousand Island Lake each year, but the annual fishing quota was limited to 2,000 tn. All the fish caught must be over four years old to ensure the ecological balance.

1. **A bird's view of the grand scene of fishing**
2. **During the Jiajing reign in Ming Dynasty, Sun Chao, the owner of the Yi Gate in Longmen ancient town, was the wealthiest man in the seven counties of that area. However, he lived a plain and simple life and was very committed to the charity.**
3. **The Earl Passenger Liner on the Thousand Island Lake is the first four-star hotel style cruise on inland lakes in China.**

Travel Tips

To Hangzhou

By Air

Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport is located in the east of Xinjie Town of Xiaoshan District and 27 km from the city centre. Flights connect Hangzhou with more than 50 cities, including Japan, Singapore, Bankok, Hong Kong, Macao, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Haikou, Shantou, Guilin, Kunming, Guiyang, Changsha, Wuhan, Zhengzhou, Taiyuan, Chongqing, Chengdu, Xi'an, Urumqi, Lanzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou, Jinjiang, Wenzhou, Nanchang, Nanning, Jinan, Qingdao, Dalian, Shenyang, Changchun, Harbin, etc. Shuttle buses commute between Xiaoshan International Airport and Hangzhou city centre at 50 minutes intervals. Tickets are sold at ¥15 for a single journey. The shuttle bus ride takes 45 minutes.

Train

There are two train stations in Hangzhou, namely the East Train Station and the Urban Train Station. The Urban Train Station is located in the city centre. The East Train Station is located at the east end of Wenhui Road. In case of emergency, passengers can purchase tickets through the green track or buy tickets after boarding.

Coach

There are four coach stations in Hangzhou, namely the East Coach Station, South Coach Station, West Coach Station and North Coach Station. Coaches depart Hangzhou to various destinations ranging from Shenjiamen of Zhoushan in the east, Shenzhen of Guangdong Province in the south, Yichang of Hubei Province in the west and Qingdao of Shandong Province in the north.

Urban Transport

Public transportation inside Hangzhou is very extensive and convenient too. There are two types of buses, namely the regular buses and air-conditioned buses. The common buses charge one yuan per person while the air-conditioned ones charge about three yuan (monthly buses tickets are not accepted in the majority of air-conditioned buses).

The minimum charge of taxis is ¥10, after the initial four kilometres, each kilometre costs ¥1.8. The Mercedes Benz taxis start at ¥12 and cost ¥2.5 after the first four kilometres and cost three yuan per kilometre after eight kilometres.

It costs ¥40 per person for a round trip of the Xihu Lake in an electro mobile (starting from Hubin, via Yongjin Park, liulang Wenying, Long Bridge, Su Dyke, Bai Dyke and return to Hubin, or one could get on at any of the stops). Tourists can choose to get alight once and then head on.

Accommodation

There are more than 100 middle and high class hotels in Hangzhou, among those near the Xihu Lake scenic area are comparatively more expensive. A five-star room: ¥800~1000, 4-star: ¥500~700, 3-star: ¥300~400. Common hostels are located in the streets and lanes with air-conditioning and bathroom. The price is ¥120, which is more suitable for ordinary consumers. For young tourists, the International Youth Hostel opposite the China Fine Art Academy on Nanshan Road is less then 100 m to the Xihu Lake. It is surrounded by many cafés and bars and should be an ideal choice. A standard room there costs ¥200, with discounts to members.

Admission

Lingyin Feilai Peak: ¥35, Lingyin Temple: ¥30, Liuhe Pagoda: ¥30, Leifeng Pagoda: ¥40, Chenghuang Court: ¥30, Yue Temple: ¥25, Moon Reflection on Three Lakes: ¥20, Qianwang Temple: ¥15, Guozhuang: ¥10, Hupao Spring: ¥15, Former Residence of Hu Xueyan: ¥20

Former Residence of Celebrities

Qiushui Villa is a southern China garden style architecture built by Shi Liangcai. He was a famous figure in the newspaper industries of China in 1930s and also the owner of Shanghai Shen Paper. The villa was named after his beloved Shen Qiushui. The area was about 2,000 m^2. It is now a part of the Xinxin Hotel.

Add: 38 Beishan Road, Hangzhou City

The former residence of Yuqian is the place where the famous militarist and politician of Ming Dynasty lived. The Zhongsu Hall, Sixian Court and ancient well in the residence have been repaired and renovated. The residence also exhibits the life of Yu Qian.

Add: 41 Citang Lane, Qing He Fang, Hangzhou

The former residence of Hu Xueyan occupies and area of over 5,000 m^2 and includes architectures such as the Rosewood Hall, 13 Builing, Zhi Garden and Yufeng Tower. It is the largest-scale former residence of celebrities in Hangzhou so far, and is also a symbolic cultural site of Hangzhou.

Add: 15 Baoyuan Street, Wangjiang Men, Hangzhou Ticket: ¥20

In order to escape political persecution, the former residence of Yu Dafu was purchased by Yu Dafu in 1933 when he relocated his whole family from Shanghai to Hangzhou.

Add: 63 Changguan Lane, University Road, Hangzhou City

Travel Tips

The former residence of Xia Yan, who was a film artist in China, covers an area of 1200 m^2. It is a southern China residential architecture. Inside the residence, the glasses and clothes of Mr. Xia Yan, calligraphy and painting of famous artists, as well as photos of his career are exhibited.
Add: 66 Zhongxin Road, Yanjia Lane, hangzhou City

The former residence of Huang Binhong was the residence of the modern landscape painter Mr. Huang Binhong when he taught in Hangzhou at his late years. It is a two-storey lime and brick structure building and has become the "Huang Binhong Memorial Hall".
Add: 31 Qixia Ling Lu, hangzhou City

The former residence of Gong Zizhen is a two-storey building with Qing Dynasty style. It covers an area of over 600 m^2. It is now used as Gong Zizhen Memorial Hall. There are four exhibition rooms in the hall that exhibit photos literature on the life of Gong Zizhen, the chronicle of the Gong family, poems of later studies, etc.
Add: Inside Xiao Caiyuan, 6 Mapo Lane, Jiefang Road, Hangzhou City

The former residence of Du Jinsheng is located at the scenic Maojia Pu. It is a Chinese style garden villa with brick and wooden structure, and it has a big garden and green fence. It is now a cultural scenic spot.
Add: 19 Maojia Pu by the Xihu Lake, Hangzhou City

Hangzhou Cuisine

Those who dine at traditional restaurants such as Lou Wai Lou, Tian Xiang Lou, Shan Wai Shan and Tian Wai Tian are mostly tourists from outside of Hangzhou. The dishes there are plain and expensive. If you order traditional dishes like Dongpo Pork, Xihu Lake Sour Fish, Longjing Shrimp and Fried Bean Curd Skin, Hangzhou people may think you are old fashioned. In recent years, Hangzhou dishes have integrated flavour from all round China and created many new dishes by successfully merging the northern and southern flavours. This has raised a passion for Hangzhou cuisine in China. Restaurants like New Xile, New Sunshine and Zhang Shengji have over 800 seats each with many luxury individual rooms. As they expand, their businesses have extended to Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Ningbo and Naning. The cuisine street has recently opened at Qing He Fang.
Generally, three hundred yuan can buy a good meal for about five persons. Therefore, most of the famous restaurants in Hangzhou are full of customers. Surcharge and tax are all included in the price.

Teahouses

Hangzhou people are tea lovers. As early as in Song Dynasty, various kinds of teahouses spread out in all streets and lanes of Hangzhou. Almost everybody loves to drink tea. There are now more than 300 tea houses in Hangzhou. Those of higher classes are the Lakeside Teahouse, Door Ear, Green Rattan, Tai Chi, Blue Treasure, and Cheng Huang Ge.
Of these teahouses, the Lakeside has the best surrounding as it is right by the lake, especially at sunset, it is just ideal to savour the tea while you enjoy the beautiful scenery. The decoration of Door Ear is quite elegant. It is suitable for white-collars to savour tea and chat. Green Rattan has the most variety of tea cakes and snack.
As the business is so good, the teahouse at Qing He Fang is a bit noisy. It has an old fashion wooded bar door, four-seater square tables, and long benches. The waiters and waitresses there are dressed in black and wear skullcap.
Cheng Huang Ge Teahouse on top of Wushan Mountain allows customers to see the Xihu Lake in the north, Hangzhou City in the east and Qiantang River in the south. If you want to drink tea at a farmer's house in the tea growing area, Longjing and Meijiawu should be good choices. If you want to drink tea for a whole day, you could order a few dishes at noon and have a farmer's meal that will make you feel easy the whole day. If you go to Longjing or Meijiawu to drink tea on around Qingming Festival in spring, you can also drink the latest Longjing tea.

Entertainment

- Party World KTV is incredibly popular. The Party World KTV at Hangzhou Xihu Lake is the most luxurious among the seven branches in Mainland China. Apart from the 130 private rooms, there are VIP rooms available. The rooms have a mini bar, a table area and a small stage. It can take up to 20 people. A VIP room has an area of 100 m^2 with four lighting modes. The light can change to the rhythm of the music.
  Charges: For standard private room, about ¥35 during daytime and ¥98 during nighttime. However, the buffet here is ¥19 per person and it has salad, fruit, Chinese and western cakes, drinks, cold dishes and hot dishes available.
  Add: Hubin, Xihu Lake, Hangzhou
- Nanshan Road is the bar and cafe street of Hangzhou, and this is where the nightlife is. There are mini rock concerts, exotic jazz performance, and beer gardens. However, this bar street is extremely quiet during the day. The Chinese Fine Art Institute and Pan Tianshou Memorial Hall are both located here. Maybe due to the proximity of the art institute, there are many art galleries along the street.

Scenic Spots in Fuyang

Tickets for the Former residence of Yu Dafa in Fuyang: ¥10
Add: 1 Dafu Lane, Fuchun Road, Fuyang City
Ticket for Longmen ancient town in Fuyang: ¥35

Hangzhou to Longmen Acient Town in Fuyang

There is no direct bus available from Hangzhou to Fuyang Longmen ancient town. Tourists must make a transit in Fuyang. There are 40 coaches departed from Hangzhou East Coach Station (Angel Branch Station) every day. The fare is ¥6.7. There are more than 10 buses from Fuyang to Longmen ancient town. If you are driving, you can start from Hangzhou, take National Highway No. 320 south section to Tonglu direction, pass Zhongpu Bridge Toll Station, go 100 m further and exit off the highway, then drive eight kilometres further on the country road.

Lodgoing: Fuchun Villa

Add: 6 Huawu Road, Fuyang City

Scenic Spots in Tonglu

Ticket for Yan Ziling Fishing Platform and Small Three Gorges on Fuchun River: ¥60

Cruise: ¥60 per head, painted boat: ¥80 per head, Dragon boat: ¥75 per head, speed boat: ¥90

Transportation to Tonglu

There are 40 coaches departed from Hangzhou East Coach Station every day. The fare for deluxe coach is ¥27 that for common coach was ¥23. The journey took about two hours. Get alight in Tonglu then make a transit to Qili Long Canyon. Fare: ¥3. You can also take a coach to Jiande from Hangzhou East Coach Station and got alight on the way at Qili Long, then took a motor tricycle to Yan Ziling Fishing Platform Cruise Wharf. Fare: ¥5.

Lodging: Tonglu Hotel

Add: 40 Fuchun Road, Tonglu (an old hotel but the river view rooms are fantastic)

Standard room at around ¥200.

Ticket for the Thousand Island Lake: ¥60

A Route: Scenic spots include Meifeng Island, Ostrich, Money Island, Three Lakes Island, Peacock Island. Cruise Ticket: ¥60 per person, insurance: ¥1.

B Route: Scenic spots include: Romantic Island, Five Dragon Island, Dragon Mountain Island Cruise Ticket: ¥50 per person, insurance: ¥1. Note: There is a minimum charge of 6 persons, groups with less than 6 people are expected to pay the minimum fare.

Transportation to the Thousand Island Lake

There are 38 coaches departed from Hangzhou West Coach Station for Chun'an Thousand Island Lake every day. Fare: ¥43, journey took about 2.5 hours.

Lodging: Kaiyuan Holiday Village, Thousand Island Lake

Add: Qilin Peninsula, Qiandao Hu Town (the first 5-star hotel in Zhejiang with Hawaii Style)

Standard room: About ¥1,000

Earl Deluxe Passenger Liner: The first four-star hotel style cruise on inland lakes in China. There are a total of six stories of decks. The liner can accommodate 180 people. The total passenger capacity is 500 persons. There are various kinds of food, beverage, leisure and recreational facilities on the liner: Chinese and western restaurant, music cafe, tea area, theatre, KTV private rooms, multifunctional dance hall, cybercafe, beauty saloon and message room, business centre and large-scale outdoor stage.

Thousand Island Lake Fish Restaurant

Recommendations: Quick Cure Spicy Fish Head (chub head, red chilly, onion, ginger, garlic and caraway), Hot and Spicy Fish (chub, red chilly, bunge prickly ash, lettuce), and Quick Cure Steamed Fish Head (chub head, mushroom, ham, ginger, shallot, bamboo shoot).

Reservation: 571-6481 1000

Specialties of the Thousand Island Lake

Dried Fish: Thousand Island Lake dried fish is very delicious.

Tea: The Jiukeng Maojian tea was a tribute to the emperor in Tang Dynasty. The new product, Jade Leaf of Thousand Island, was awarded the title of quality product by the ministry.

Kiskatom: This nut is delicious and easy to digest. The production volume here accounts for 40% of the total in China.

1. **The food street on Huimin Road of Hangzhou is the newest highlight of He Fang Street. Its has a large crowd of customers every night.**
2. **At He Teahouse on He Fang Street, the waiter wearing skullcap and long dress gives a live performance for tea drinkers.**
3. **The peak of Meifeng has the spectacular view of over 500 islands, including the Nanshan Islands and Xianqian Island and Jieshou Islands.**
4. **A speed boat passed through the maze-like islands.**

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Winter Fishing with Hezhe Fishermen

Photos & Article by Du Dianw

People of Hezhe Nationality, who live in the drainage areas of Heilongjiang River and Wusuli River, need to fish in the icebound river in winter. They dwell in the ice-cold outdoor and rough cellar[NB], enduring the hardship and coldness for a better life.

The Hezhe tribe has only the population of over 4,000. As the minority with the least population in China, the people are mostly distributed around cities or counties of Heilongjiang Province such as Tongjiang, Raohe, Fuyuan, etc. It boasts the only nationality living on fishing in the north.

Twelve years ago when I came to the Bacha Village of Tongjiang City, I got acquainted with fisherman Liu Yongqing. I stayed in his home and he provided with the meals. This time I revisited the village. Knowing he was fishing around the fishing spot of Xiakouzuizi, about eight kilometres northeast to the village, I decided to head for the place and find him. Xiakouzuizi was the largest fishing spot in the local area, where there were 10 odd fishermen with five or six cellars.

Sashimi Delight

I arrived and found that people around the spot were fishing beside the icebound river. One fisherman was pulling the waterline rope. The short man with a stocking cap on the head and the cigarette in the mouth was staggering on the ice with the crookback. He was Liu Yongqing. Although he was just 56 years old, he had been gotten aged in these 10 years with a humpback and a furrowed face. He immediately recognised me and began to tidy up the fishing gear. I stopped and told him that I would stay over for several days.

At about three o'clock or more in the afternoon, fishermen all return home one after another. After Liu returned back to his cellar, he began preparing supper for me. The fisherman here had only two meals in winter, breakfast and supper. The supper had cooked rice, crucian braised with cabbage and bean curd, as well as sashimi made from fresh trout, which was the traditional food of the people. The dainty way of making such food was to cut the fish into pieces, and match with cucumber and cabbage pieces, and finally mix with the chili and other condiments. Even though due to the limited condition, we had to eat the sliced fish dipping with soy sauce alone, the supper was indeed quite delicious. According to Liu, the crucian caught before the river frozen was stored in the ship and will be sold on New Year's Day and Spring Festival. However, due to the crucian breeding of inlanders, the price greatly dropped. The crucian could only sell five to six yuan comparing to over ¥10 several years ago.

Stayed Overnight at Liu's Cellar

The cellar was located against the upland woods near the river. There was the free ground of two to three square metres in the cellar with the kitchen range near. Inside was the kang (earthen bed) with the thick sponge and the black quilt, where could hold three to four persons. I was afraid that the kang might be too hot, so I slept outside together with Liu and two of his family members. I could hardly sleep, for there was the great difference in temperature. The side near the kang was too hot, while the other side was too cold. Furthermore, the seemly plain kang was like the hammock, lower in the middle and higher on the four sides. Perhaps the ceiling was not pressed tightly, and next morning I found that there was dust everywhere on my face, hair and mouth. However, the other three men had a sound sleep.

Liu invited me to his house next night and I brought him some of his favourite cigarettes and drinks. Liu rented a single-storied house, for his former house had given to his son and his daughter-in-law. The house was simply furnished with the old 18" colour TV and the large-size wardrobe. However, the meal was quite sumptuous with the sashimi, sausage, ham and cooked pig ears, etc. The family of Liu's eldest son had also turned up. Liu was so happy that he drank a lot. He told me that two of his sons had gotten married and were living separately. He hoped that he could earn enough money in two to three years for building a new house for his youngest son.

Hard Netting

Liu Yongqing's son Liu Honghai was 28 years old, married and had a little son. Knowing that he and the other two fellows were going to fish in Erdaojiang River, I asked for companion.

Erdaojian River, situated about over 10 km northwest of Bacha Village, was the most notable conventional fishing spot. We set off at eight o'clock in the morning and reached the destination after one hour's walk. The three guys immediately

1. Xiaokouzuizi was the fishing spot of Bacha Village
2. Chub could be sold up to ¥18/kg.
3. Hezhe fishermen were fishing in the morning. Xiaokouzuizi of Bacha Village was the largest winter fishing spot, where there were a dozen of fishermen with six cellars. Every morning people of Hezhe would go fishing at seven or eight o'clock and returned at three to four o'clock in the afternoon.

NB: Cellar was the traditional folk house of Hezhe Nationality. It was the temporary dwelling with half underground, which was built considering the climate of the cold region of northeast China. The cellar was 1.5 m deep underground and one metre high on the ground with the triangle frame and the door in the east. Beside the door was a window.

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began fishing. Liu Honghai often went fishing with his good friends, 30-year-old Wang Deyou and 35-year-old Fu Qinghai. A dozen days ago when the river was frozen, both of him and the other two fellows cast over 20 nets respectively. They came for checking the net and fishing every day.

Netting was one of the conventional fishing methods of Hezhe Nationality in winter. When casting the net, it was the key to set the waterline rope. Firstly, check the position for net casting according to the length of the net and the flowing direction of river water before making the hole in the ice. Usually five to seven holes was necessary if the net was 30 to 50 m long. The distance between holes should be seven to eight metres. After making the hole, one fixed the end of the waterline rope in the spot for casting net and put the other end fastened the brick or stone into the water. One thread all of the holes with the rope by use of the rod and connected the end of the rope with the net. Pulled the other end to cast the net into the water. Furthermore, you needed to check the net every day for the net might be jammed with floaters. Usually what you should catch in winter was mainly the chub. The net of 30 to 50 m long might hitch only three to five fish at best. Since the netting was economical and convenient, it became the superior method for fishing in winter adopted by Hezhe Nationality. You could catch sight of it in every fishing spot.

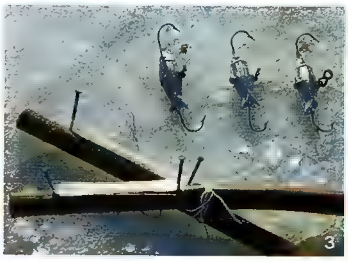
It was not easy for Wang Deyou and Fu Qinghai to fish cooperatively, not to mention the hard work of Liu Honghai. I found that he trotted quite often. With the temperature of -15°C in Heilongjiang, the cold wind was so harsh that we still felt no warmth even with the down clothes and leather gloves, but Liu sweated all over with the old cotton-padded clothes wetted with the ice water. Due to the icy water and hard work, his hands had several cracks with one bleeding wound and one of his eyes had some problem. Catching sight of these, I could not help grieving the hardship of fisherman.

At night I gave him a little bottle of medicine for his wound. He was so touched that he insisted upon giving me a sturgeon. I declined and asked him why he did not consider a partnership. He forced a smile and replied that he was still young and could stand the hardship to make more money, for the family was poor.

Water Pollution Affecting Fish Harvest

Fu Qinghai had just married shortly. He made about ¥4,000 on fishing and ¥2,000 on land rental. He told us that there used to be many fishermen fishing here. However, since the fish population had been decreasing in the recent dozen of years, there were only a few fishermen left. According to him, the decline attributed to the excessive commercial fishing and the pollution from the waste water of the Kiamusze paper mill in the upper reaches of the river.

Today was their best harvest in winter. Wang Deyou and Fu Qinghai caught a total of 10 kg of fish, and Liu Honghai, over 20 kg.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Special Fishing Methods

Hezhe people had two other unique fishing instruments: the net with small bells and the stick of hooks.

I caught sight of the fishing net with small bells in Bacha Village. There was a square barrack beside the Toudao River in the west of the village. Along the icy path was the row of weir. At the beginning I mistook it as the new toilet, and then I saw a guy named Yang Shuang fishing there. Inside the cottage, there was the bed and iron stove. The small bell net was about seven to eight metres long and wide. The net inside was fastened with several spring ropes. The other end of the ropes was connected with the electrical bell outside (formerly the small bell). When the fish entered into the net and bumped into the rope, the bell would ring. The fisherman would immediately pull the opening rope and raise the net stick to let the fish falling into the bottom. Since it was cold and the fisherman could not leave away at any time, the barrack was necessary. The row of weir outside was to prevent the fish from escaping. Fishing with the small bell net depended strictly on the river zone and water flow. Since there was no fish in fast current and the net was useless in slow current, the suitable time for fishing was only over one month annually.

Yang Shuang told me that he and his friend jointly bought and used the small bell net with the investment capital of over ¥600. They could catch fish of 10 to 15 kg daily and each could earn over ¥1,000 in winter. However, the net was too expensive for most, and presently there were only ten odd users in Bacha and Jiejinkou villages.

I learnt about the "hook fishing" in the Koumen fishing spot of Jiejinkou. These people put their rod with hooks inside the holes made on the ice ground, and then shook it continuously to lure the prey. Such fishing rod was the oldest fishing gear in the local area, and it used to be fastened with the hair or tail of a rabbit. This instrument is mainly for leisure fishing. An old woman named You Guilan, 63, told us that she had merely caught about two kilograms of fish in a dozen days, and she spent most of her time waiting.

Fancy Fish Skin Clothes

Due to the development of local tourism and an increased demand of collection items from museums at home and abroad, the traditional Hezhe fish-skin clothes were treasured up.

According to You Yufeng, the fish skin clothes were made for appreciation and collection. They chose mostly the inexpensive fish like bighead fish and salmon, each of which should be over five kilograms. A suit of the clothes needed about the fish skin of 50 to 70 kg with the cost of ¥1,500. In the fish skin processing, they scraped off the oil in the skin, exposed it to sunlight on the wall for one to two days and then draught the skin. Each of the fish skin was dried with the wood gavel for about one hour. Drying the fish skin well was the key for making fish skin clothes. If the skin was not dried enough, the clothes might breed bugs. Yet, if the skin was too dry, the texture might be too rough. Most tailors would start making fish skin clothes in summer, for the fish at that time would be less expensive.

It should take about 20 days to make one suit of clothes, which could generally be preserved for 10 to 20 years. You Yufeng could make two suits per year in her spare time. Each suit together with matching shoes could sell up to ¥5,000. Due to the high manufacturing cost, she dared not to make extra clothes. Therefore, making fish skin clothes was the sideline business to the family. She and her husband mainly made their living by fishing, and they made about ¥5,000 per year. She expressed her ambition to develop such valuable culture, but there was little demand and capital.

1. **Cellar in Erdaojiang fishing spot, where the three fishermen had a rest temporarily.**
2. **Outside of the small bell net**
3. **Rod of hooks**
4. **Two women were processing the fish skin in the house of Wu Fusheng.**
5. **You Yufeng was making fish skin clothes.**

Winter Fishing of Hezhe People

The Hezhe people are mainly distributed around the Songari River, Wusuli River and middle and lower reaches of Heilongjiang River. Their fishing villages are in Jiejinkou of Tongjiang city, Bacha and Sipai of Raohe County. It has a population of 1,500.

Winter fishing (from November to Spring Festival) is part of the conventional fishing lifestyle of Hezhe people. There are usually nearly 100 people living in the cellar and fishing in the drainage areas of Heilongjiang and Wusuli Rivers during the period of winter.

Finding a good fishing spot is the key for winter fishing. Such location is highly depended on water flow and landform. The best site has a steady water whirlpool, for the place was warm in winter. The fishing gears should also be carefully chosen. The net is good for fishing in steady water, for the net will not be easily jammed. The small bell net can be used in site with fast current, for the fish can be rushed into the net. As for shallow sites, hoop net is recommended.

In addition, if it is necessary to stay the night in the fishing spot, you can choose the place where there are trees (for making a bon fire). Most winter fishing spots of Jiejinkou and Bacha are occupied for generations.

Yalong River is an important tributary of the Yangtze River. Its headstream is hidden at the south foot of Bayankala Mountain in Qinghai, where the altitude is nearly 5,000 m. Starting as a small stream, it runs through the western part of Sichuan until it finally flows into the Yangtze River at Panzhihua.

Tracing the Headstream o

Photos & Article by Shui Xiaojie

Yalong River

For many people, Yalong River is still a remote and strange "virgin river". In order to unveil her, I set off in autumn with a Yalong River research team.

Meeting "Plateauholic"

After travelling in train for several days, we arrived Panzhihua and joined the research team. The team members were from Ertan Waterpower Development Company and CCTV. Yalong River in particular aroused my interest, since it is the first major tributary of the Yangtze River with an annual runoff that is larger than the Yellow River.

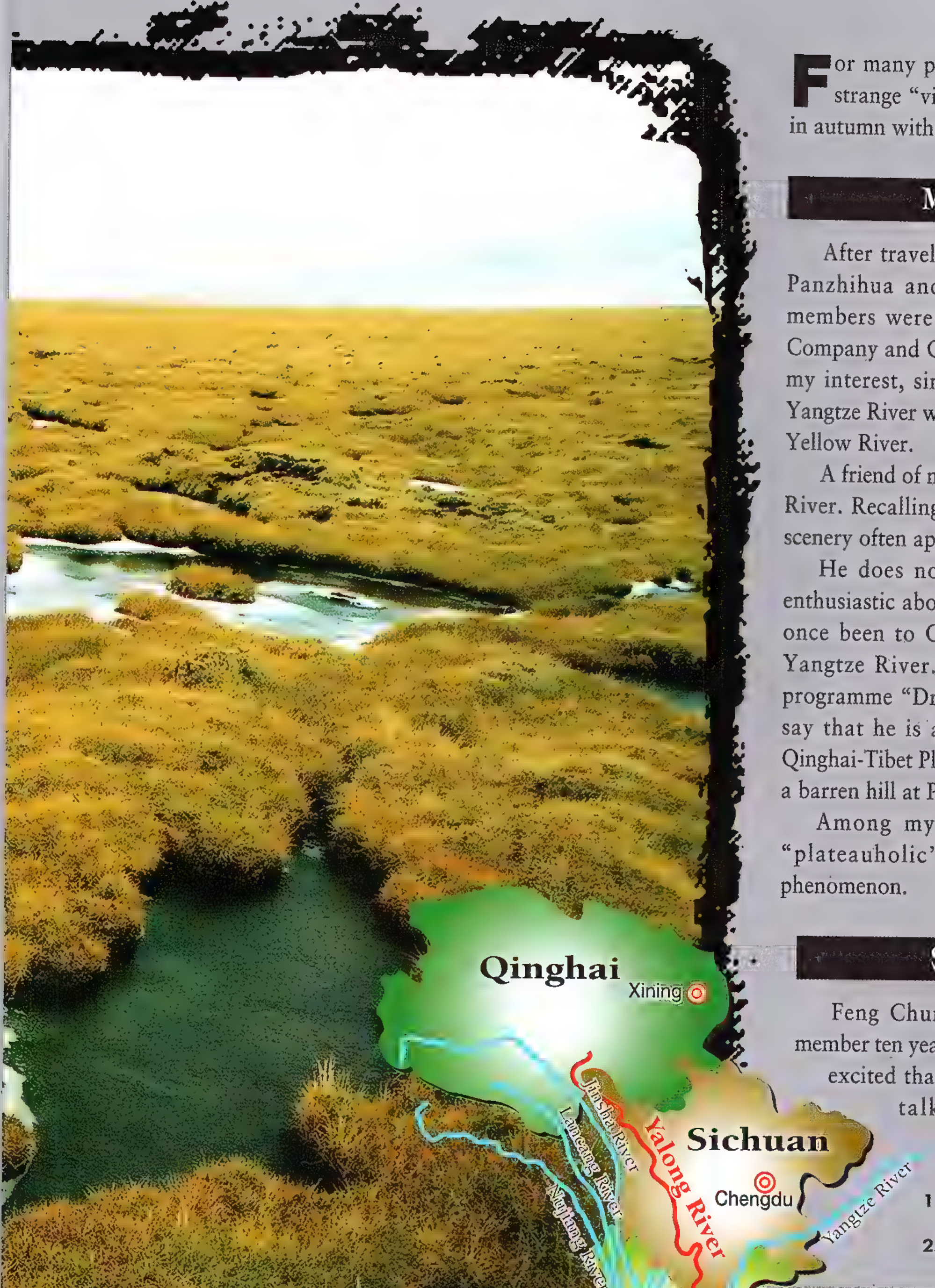
A friend of mine had been to the headstream of Yalong River. Recalling what he described to me, the beautiful scenery often appeared in my dreams.

He does not love the temptations of city and is enthusiastic about exploration and tree planting. He had once been to Geladandong — the headstream of the Yangtze River. He was the script writer for the TV programme "Drifting on the Yangtze River". I can even say that he is a typical "plateauholic". He visits the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau every year and is thinking of finding a barren hill at Panzhihua to plant his own trees.

Among my friends, there are more and more "plateauholic" of this kind. I think it is a good phenomenon.

Smart Use of Condom

Feng Chun, who was a Yangtze River drifting member ten years ago, was our guide this time. He was so excited that could not help shouting at the walkie-talkie. I felt a bit strange about his



1. Lower dotted grassplots near the source of Yalong River
2. The research team set up stone tablets

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excitement, and found it hard to believe that he paid annual visit here. Wu Wei, another member, gave me two condoms before we set off. I was quite shock, but soon I figured out that they were used as water-proof pockets for cameras when drifting. I had four cameras with me, so I asked for two more. Except these two friends I had met before, other faces in the team were new to me.

After leaving Ertan, our car travelled northwards along the canyon near the river. There were landslides all the way along. There were only Russian peashrub, ruderal and woodland on the mountains. The river was grayish and pale, and tall mountains and canyons were everywhere. This area live the Yi people. The beautiful scenery and unique customs are appealing but here is one of the poorest areas in China. At that night, we arrived Xichang — the capital city of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture.

The next day we set off before dawn. Along the way were grass and secondary forest. The landscape remained the same all the way down to Kangding of Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. Ah Cheng, the governor of the Prefecture, told us that over a half of their income was from cutting the forests, and in some counties this proportion even exceeded 90%. He wished the prefecture could be included in the Yangtze River Protection Forest System as soon as possible. He said, "More poor we were, more trees we cut, and vice versa." In the two prefectures of Ganzi and Liangshan, the soil erosion caused by deforestation is striking. Fortunately, after our trip, the State decided to impose overall prohibition on forest cutting in this area.

Kangding is situated at the bank of Wasi River with altitude more than 2,600 m. We walked out of the town and headed westwards for dozens of kilometres over the Zheduo Mountain Pass, where the altitude suddenly increased to over 4,000 m. It seemed to be an entirely different world. The greenery was gone and replaced by a vast orange background with big pieces of grassplots.

Thirteen Million Mice

For most of the members in our team, the most attractive part of this journey would be going up to the plateau. We soon got bored of the green or yellowish mountains in Kangding.

Two days later, we arrived Xinluhai at the foot of Que'er Mountain and started the first trial-drift. The altitude of Que'er Mountain was 6,168 m. It was the last natural barrier on the North Route of Sichuan-Tibet Highway before entering Tibet. Xinluhai is a plateau lake. The glaciers stretched into the lake and formed fairly tale-like scenery with the pine trees and cypress trees along the banks. It was frightening yet safe to drift on the lake. The wind was chilling enough to make you feel being bitten. The night when we camped by the lake, we were under the test of the weather. The snow and high wind made the whole world white. It felt like an ice cave inside the tent, and the sleeping bag felt like a damp piece of paper stuck on my body.

I went out to cut a few tree branches for the fire, and soon had a very bad headache. I had made the worst mistake on the plateau by having too much physical activities. I was then hit by altitude sickness worse than my previous experience at the foot of Geladandong (6,621 m). The air breathed into my lung was not enough to let it expand. I felt weak and powerless. Everything looked pale as if there was a heavy fog right in front

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of me. Song Yang of CCTV, too, finally collapsed because of altitude sickness at Shiqu County. He vomited and looked so pale. The altitude then was 4,200 m.

The most worrying and scaring thing was the mice. The number of abhorrent plateau mice in the county is over one billion, which means more than one mouse for each people in China.

In recent years, due to excessive hunting of wild animal and abuse of grassplots, the ecological chain is destroyed. In this previously fertile and famous grassplot, sand has invaded and people have retreated. Desertification is taking shape.

Car Trapped in Swamp

Set off from Shiqu County, we entered Qinghai. On the way we met three Lamas. Almost on each trip to the plateau we saw such devotional palmers who always won our esteem. The two lamas were peaceful and calm. On this snowy plateau, the spiritual power always made us acclaimed. These people, who looked at the world from a bird view, always made me feel small. Entering Yushu in Qinghai, I saw the Xinzhai Marnyi Pile, which is said to be the biggest one in the world. Local people said that there were a total of 2.5 billion Marnyi stones in the pile.

The most challenging moment was there. At noon, we set up our tent in a valley at the southern foot of Bayankala Mountain in Chengduo County and got ready to march to the headstream.

The headstream was made up of many small streams widely spread out. The valley where our camp located was a swamp. I checked with the portable satellite positioning device and found out that the camp was 20 km away from the headstream and the altitude was over 4,800 m. After a quick lunch, five members set off to explore the road, hoping to find a road that could lead the jeeps directly to the source point.

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The wind and snow were started again. We waited till it got dark, but only one jeep returned. They said one jeep got stuck in the swamp. In such a windy and snowy evening, they could only leave the jeep there. So there was no other choice but going to the source point on foot. At that night, we sang revolutionary songs to cheer ourselves up. Early in the morning, we set out in

1. Two young Lamas we met on the way
2. Police officer on duty near the source of Yalong River
3. A small town near the source of Yalong River
4. Research team at trial-drift in Luhai
5. Tibetan girl

two groups: our group made bouncy paces along the swamp, while the other went via the car track to get the jeep out.

Venturing to the Source Point on Foot

It was never an easy and pleasant thing to walk at an altitude of over 5,000 m.

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We were talking and laughing for the first one or two kilometres. Unconsciously, we quieted down a bit and as we went on, and eventually, everybody was completed silent. The reason was so simple. Under the threat of anoxia, we hesitated to waste oxygen and energy. The further we walked, the more difficult our paces were. At the beginning we took a rest at 30 minutes intervals, then 20 minutes and then 10 minutes.... After two hours, we almost had to take a rest for every 5 minutes.

The first one to collapse was Chen who was the tallest among us. As soon as we rested he laid on the grassland fully stretched, ignoring the ice and swamp. I was fully aware that he should not be doing this. So I kept shouting and asked him to get up. I almost could not help kicking him but I managed to persuade him.

We walked, stopped and then walked again. We finally saw the trapped jeep in the afternoon. After a while, we saw from the binoculars that the rescue group had caught up with us and were struggling up and down around the trapped jeep.

At 3 PM, the two groups of us joined and arrived at the source point of Yalong River. The satellite positioning device recorded that the altitude here was 4,963 m. The ridge of Bayankala Mountain above the source point of Yalong River are the two main water systems of the Yangtze River and the Yellow River. One side of the ridge belonged to the Yangtze River water system while the other side the Yellow River's. The source point of the Yellow River was on the other side of the mountain and was one or two hundred kilometres from where we stood.

The altitude of the Bayankala snow mountain is 5,266 m. The water here produced by melting snow had given birth to the Yangtze River and the Yellow River — the Mother Rivers of the Chinese nation.

It was another heavy snow that made us hardly able to keep our eyes open. We tried our best to calm down and worked together to set up the stone tablet as the sign of the source point. After taking pictures we hurried away without daring to stay long.

Narrow Escape from the Snow Storm

It was completely dark around. The wind, accompanied by snow, began to blow. We could hardly tell the sky from the ground. Our jeep was trapped again. After we pushed it for very short distance it simply died down. There was nothing we could think of but complete helplessness.

The temperature suddenly dropped to -28°C. We kept struggling to push and pull the jeep but it just refused to work. At last, the jeep began to roar again and started. We pull together with all our efforts, hoping to push it a bit more to speed it up and got out of the swamp. But suddenly our captain passed out.

I watched this tough guy collapsed. We tried almost everything including rubbing his head and feeding him water. After a long time, he slowly came back to himself. We got him into the front seat of the jeep, and asked him to take a rest and assured that we would make our way out. Later, he kept murmuring that being the captain, he should be responsible for everybody. I just could not help laughing — if we were to die, there would be no one left to be held responsible.

However, judging from the situation then, should the jeep really break down, we definitely could not make our way out before dark. If we had not turned to the camp before it got dark, a few, or even all, of us could have died.

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The snow was deep that the original route was no way to be identified. After we arrived at the source point, Da Wa, the Tibetan Captain of the Traffic Police Brigade and our voluntary guide, had been running ahead of the jeep to explore the way for us. We finally made back to the camp short after it got dark.

After tracing the source of the Yalong River, the research team went on along Yalong River for the next research, while I hurried to Yushu to join my fellows of the team touring the Yangtze River, and thereby completed my journey to the Yalong River.

1. **Taking a rest on the grassland**
2. **The author and a group of Tibetan friends at Marnyigange**
3. **Herdsmen at the source of Yalong River. The ornaments on their horses were magnificent.**
4. **There were many rare animals near the source of Yalong River.**

Profile of Yalong River

Lying at the southeast edge of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau alongside with Jinsha River, Yalong River is the first major tributary of Yangtze River. It runs from north to south with an annual runoff that is larger than the Yellow River. The length of the trunk stream is about 1,571 km.

Yalong River is also named Ruo River, Dachong River and Junior Jinsha River. It is originated at the southern foot of Bayankala Mountain in Qinghai, with Zhaqu as its source point. It runs through Yushu Tibetan Prefecture in Qinghai to Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan, where it is known as Yalong River. Then it flows to Xinlong and Liang He Kou, where a fresh water river joins it and significantly increases its volume. The river valley here gradually takes the shape of a high mountain gorge, and it turns southwards, enters Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. It flows along Jinping Mountain to Jiulong River Bayou, where it suddenly turn and form the famous Yalong River Bay. It finally joins into the Yangtze River near Panzhihua.

The Yalong River drainage is high in the north and low in the south. The area of the drainage is 129,600 km^2 and the fall is 3,870 m. It has no river navigation capacity but the hydraulic resource is rich. China is now under electric power shortage, that 80% of the electric power is still generated by thermal power while only 20% by hydropower. Due to technical reasons, power generated by nuclear power stations, wind power and solar power only accounts for an insignificant proportion. Undoubtedly, waterpower generation is more environmental friendly. Therefore, the development of China's rich hydraulic power resources is very important. It still needs continuous explorations to investigate how the resources can be fully developed.

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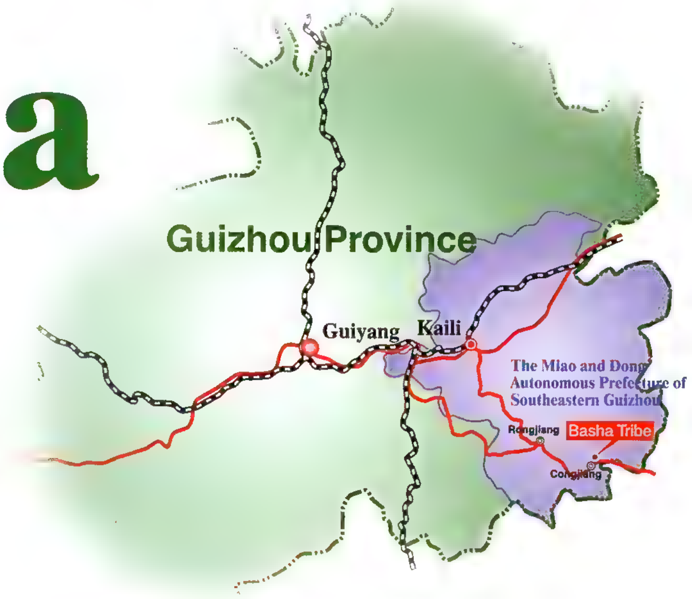
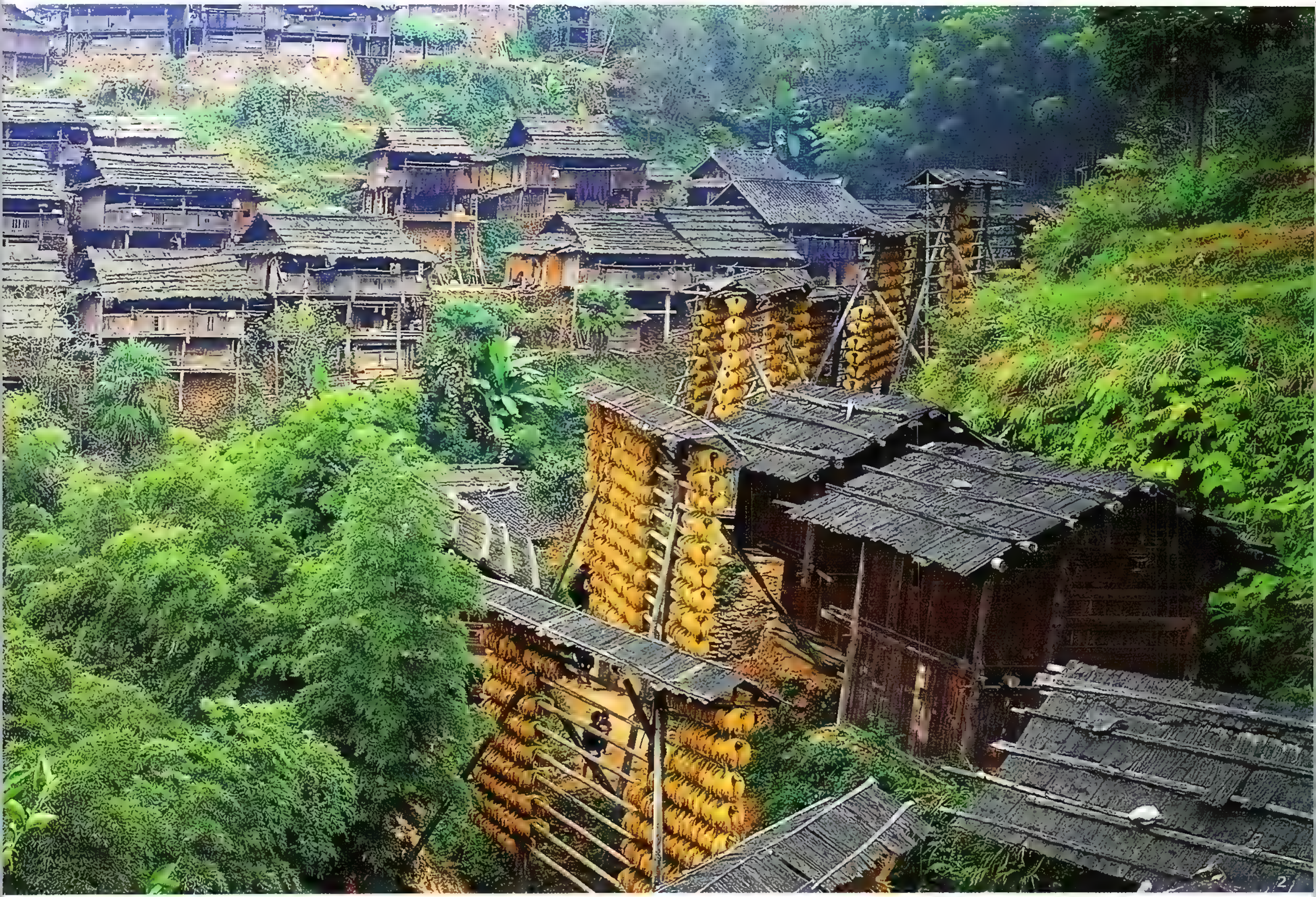
The Last Tribe of Gunmen

—Basha

Photos by Lu Xianyi   Article by Zhang Xiaosong

A Miao nationality tribe hidden deep in the mountains used to stand aloof from the worldly affairs and live a peaceful life before the extensive media coverage ....


Guizhou Province
Guiyang
Kaili
The Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture of Southeastern Guizhou
Rongjiang
Basha Tribe
Congjiang



Everything seemed so coincidental: If we had not been to Basha four years ago and had not taken photo of the Basha hunter with a bob; if we had not published the article "Tribe of Hunter[NB1]"; if Gun Yuanliang had not volunteered to be the guide for us; if there had not been so many reporters and tourist to Basha; if....

On an early morning in deep fall in 2004, we returned to Basha—a Miao nationality tribe deep in the mountainous village in Congjiang County in Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture in southeast of Guizhou Province.

A familiar view reappeared before us: under the foggy and cloudy sky, the mountains at the south foot of Miao Ling looked continuous and endless, and the misty virgin forest ran across these high mountains. Near the foot of the mountain was the winding and clear Liujiang River which ran all the way down to Pearl River and then into the sea. The forest, terrace, narrow rice fields and villages with elevated wooden house set in different layers of this beautiful picture. The elevated wooden houses with wooden balusters dotted the mountain in different layers. The bark roof of the house covered with green lichen appeared row upon row.

A Basha man in russet clothes dyed with indigo blue was carrying a back basket that contained his chopping knife. With his sporting gun that accompanied him all the time in hand, he was going into the mountains to get bavin. Beside an elevated wooden house, two Basha women wearing purple blue garments, leg wrappings and a big silver necklace were sitting by the elevated wooden house, hammering pieces of cloth that had just been dyed. The rhythmic hammering crepitated through into the valleys. They were making the most ancient costume of

1. After Basha was exposed to the outside world, reporters have come in shoals. Gun Yuanliang, captain of the hackbuteer team, has become a popular model.

2. The elevated wooden houses of the Basha village are built along the mountains. The bark roofs appear row up row and merge into the natural environment.

[NB1] The article Tribe of Gunman written by the author was published on China Culture Geography (June 2001).

China—coronal top garment—with the most ancient dyeing technique in China.

Hundreds of years ago when the ancestors of the Basha people came here, they farmed, fished and hunted for a living, and this kind of life has been maintained up till now.

Nothing seems to have changed, but the Basha is no longer the previous Basha.

Hunter Giving a Costumes Show

Basha tribe is already very famous as the Tribe of Hunter. Gun Yuanliang, the Basha man we interviewed on our last trip, has transformed from a nobody into a team leader. However, his main job, as the representative of the powerful and bold image of the "Tribal Hunter", is no longer hunting but receiving tourist and giving performances.

In October 2002, the 1st China Southeastern Guizhou Miao and Dong Autonomous Prefecture International Traditional Costumes Festival was held in the Southeastern Guizhou Autonomous Prefecture. A huge group of reporters and visitors from home and abroad gathered in Kaili, the capital city of the Prefecture. The Basha hunter were designated as the only male costume performance team.

It was the hunter's first time to travel on a bus and the first time in a big city (Kaili City, the capital city of the autonomous prefecture) and the first time to sleep in beds with pure white linen in the hostel. They smiled happily. The big feet that used to walking on mountainous paths jumped from one bed to another. The next day, the whole performance team went shopping carrying their hackbuts. The streets of Kaili City was crowded with people and the shops were packed with all sorts of commodities. They

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bent over on the windows and counters of the department stores watching the urban ladies buying one piece of clothes smartly with several hundred yuan. They were too astonished to see that, thinking: "A Basha people would not be able to earn that much amount in a whole year, but the urban lady spend on it on clothes".

The florid costumes of the Miao and Dong nationality dazzled the photographers and reporters who used up numerous rolls of film. The most attractive group is the group of Hunter Basha in shinny purple clothes. Their clothes were dyed with ancient liquidambar taiwaniana juice and their hairstyles were the most ancient bobs[NB2] of Chinese males. Their walked catwalk of valiant and heroic bearing and made their debut on the temporarily set up stage, twisting their waist while they walked and attracting all the flash lights.

The fashion festival brought fame to Basha. After the festival. Since then, photographers and tourist have come to Basha group after group, and Basha has become a famous mountainous village in Guizhou.

Turning into a Model

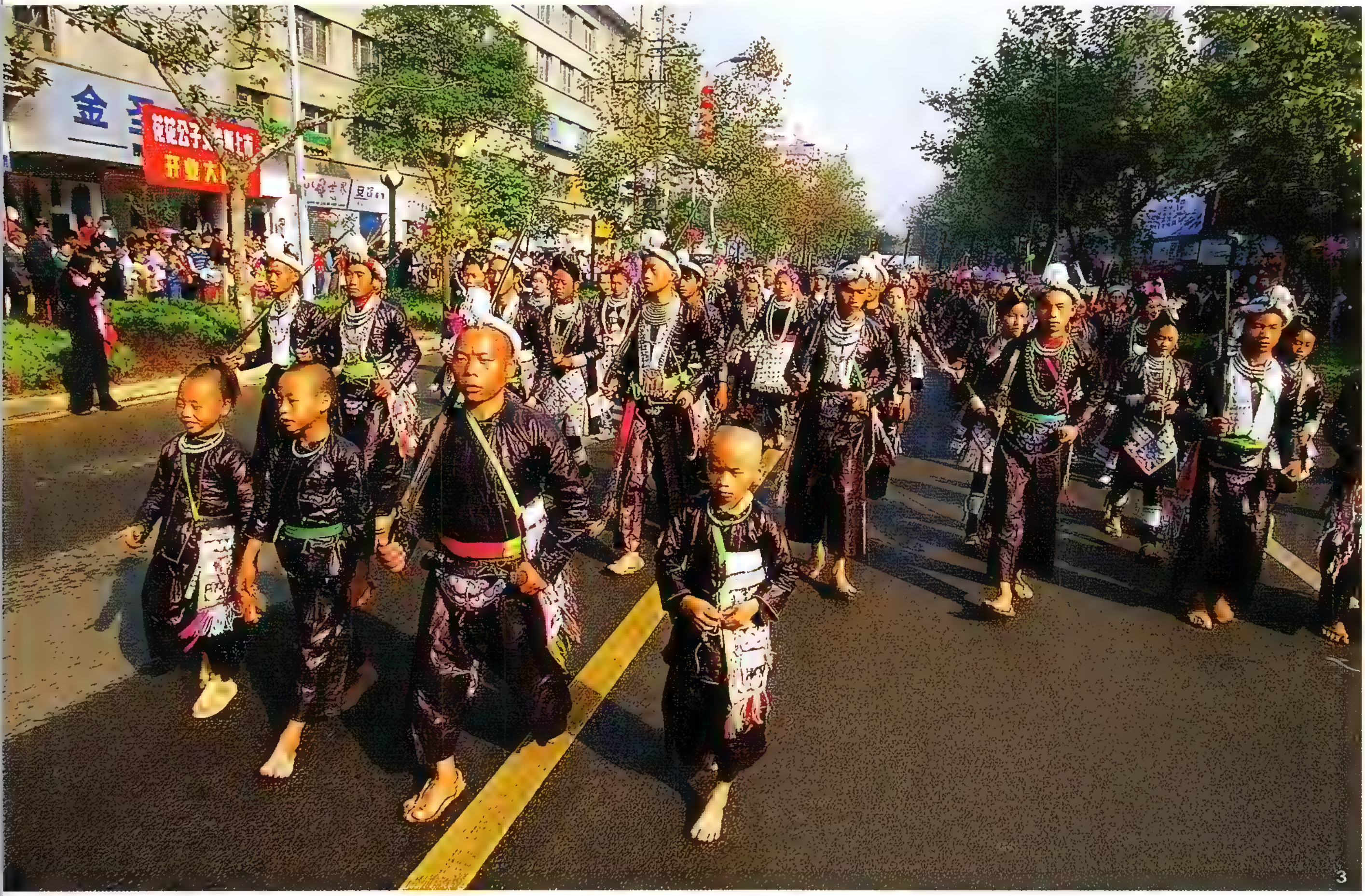
It was on that afternoon in the fall of 2000. The first Basha people we met after entering Basha was Gun Yuanliang. He was then short, impoverished, bullied, yet happy. He lived his peaceful life hunting, fishing, and playing the Lusheng instrument.

Later on, as those two famous photos were published in a magazine, Gun Yuanliang suddenly gained his fame and became the image representative of Basha hunter.

Many people pointed as Gun Yuanliang's photo on the China Cultural Geography magazine and wanted to have a photo taken with that man. Gun Yuanliang was always happy and proud to have his photos taken. In this way, Gun Yuanliang's image went to all those people from China, Hong Kong, Macao, France, USA, England, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore to places far beyond his own imagination.

Some Basha people are not willing to have their

1. **Basha hunter performing fashion show on the stage**
2. **Gun Yuanliang becomes famous as his photo was published in a magazine.**
3. **Basha men in traditional costumes walk in the street of Kaili and form a strong contrast between the county and the city.**



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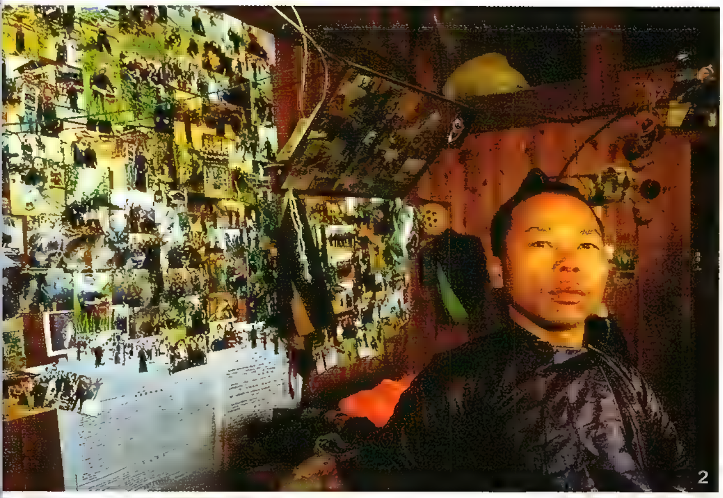
NB2: All Basha men attach much importance to their bobs. Every man has a bob on the head, which is called "Hu Gun" in Miao language. The bob is an important hairstyle for men. "Hu Gun" means to shave away most hair on the out rim of the head, leaving the central part to be bundled up as a bob. This style will be keep life-long. This hair style is the most ancient male hair style in the countryside in China up till now.

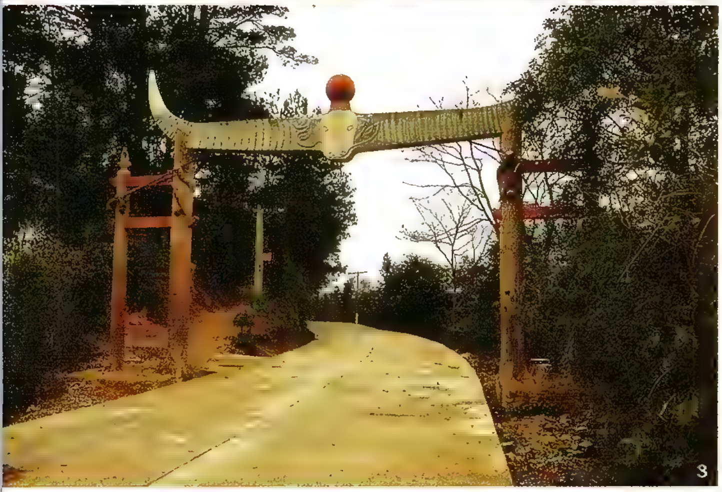
photos taken by outsiders. The elders in the village said that they were afraid that their souls would be taken into the cameras and brought away! At the beginning, Gun Yuanliang was a bit afraid; however, he was not able to turn down the entanglement of the tourist and had to make a posture and had his photo taken. He was too shy to ask for money. On one occasion, a tourist offered him two yuan after the photo is taken, Gun Yuanliang did not accept it. The tourist said to him, "I am taking a photo and I am buying your portraiture right, of course I need to pay you. This is called fair trade." Gun Yuanliang did not understand what portraiture right was but he thought, "Wow, a click on the machine makes me two yuan." Every day from then on, Gun Yuangliang carried his gun and stood at the gate of the village valiaritly looking up into the sky for photos to be taken by tourist. As time went by, he gradually gained some taste of a professional model. When a tourist takes a photo, he would stick out two figures to indicate that the price is two yuan per picture. However, some people only gave one yuan and some even left without paying. Gun Yuanliang was tolerant and never argued with them. Some aged villagers worried that Gun Yuanliang's soul would be taken away by outsiders and could not find its way home. So Gun Yuanliang invited a koradji to religious ceremonies done in his home to ensure that his soul would find its way home. Other Basha men also followed suit and sat at the gate of the village after coming back for work, carrying sporting guns on their shoulders and knife baskets at their waists, and waiting guests coming from afar in their vehicles on the 321 State Highway.

First Tribal Culture Village of China

Whereas there was the brand effects of Gun Yuanliang, the officials decided that he should be the captain of the hackbuteer team to serve tourist.

Planning and construction experts in the county built a "Tourism and Ecology Highway" for Basha, which led through the way on which the Basha people worshipped their ancestors and played their Lusheng instruments and found its winding way through the villages into the Lusheng playing-ground deep in the forest. The Lusheng playing-ground then suddenly appeared in front of the world. Those tall holy trees could no long protect the mystery and privacy of Basha.



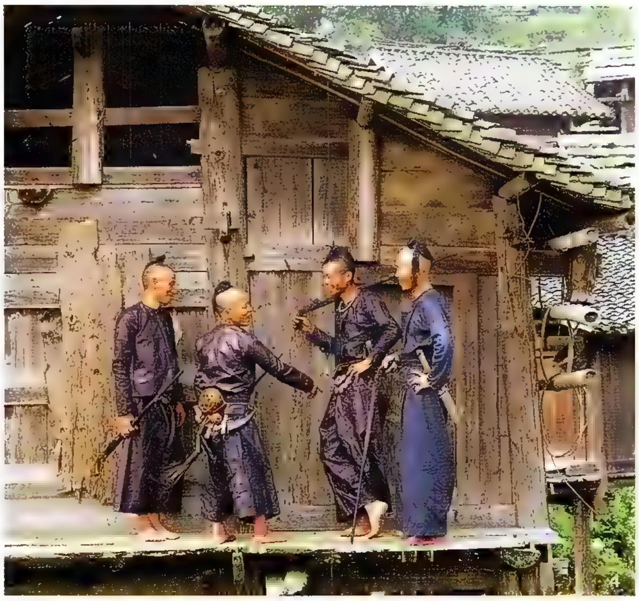


Since the ancient times, the Basha people inherited their totem worship to the ancient maple trees from the Miao nationality, and attached their respect and fear of the natural and their ancestors onto the trees. Big tree in Basha are all regarded as geomantic omen trees and protective trees. Kids in Basha need to worship the trees as Protector Grandfather, also call "Ni Dou" in Miao language. Basha people believe that kids who worship the Protector Grandfather will grow up safely.

In Basha, when a new child is born, the father will walk into the forest and find a tree (if case no appropriate tree is found, the father will plant one for the child), and make a sign on the tree to claim ownership. From then on, the live of the tree will be closely linked to the child. On the day when the child's life ends, the tree would have finished its temporal life. It will be cut down and made into a coffin to accompany the child's soul to join the ancestors. Then, people will plant another tree on the spot where they buried that descendant and this tree will begin its new life as another form of that deceased descendant of the Basha.

Now a horn Bashape gate has been built in front of the house head, with the characters "First Tribal Culture Village of China" written. Two pavilions that looked like the Dong drum towers stand with flaunt on top of the Basha village. A broad cement road leads all the way from one end of the village to the other and the road is only half a kilometre long.

More than 20 girls and lads led by Gun Yuanliang have chosen to form a tour guide and performance team. Each time when there are tourists coming into the village, the girls will present the door-blocking wine and the lads will play their Lusheng instrument. They will light up the thundering local-made cannon, fire the long guns together at the sky and present the tourist a welcoming scene with strong smell of gun powder. Then led by the Lusheng performance, the hunter and girls will busily guide the tourists to visit the village. When they arrive at the Lusheng playing ground, the girls and lad will begin their performance. The first program is tree-worshipping. In order to let the tourist clearly understand the Basha tradition of tree-worshipping, each performer will lit up a set of incense sticks and go to a pine tree in a queue, which will be led by a lad, and they will chant as they take turns to bow and present the incense sticks. The second program is head shaving and bundling up the bob, which is a coming-of-age ceremony of Basha lads. As the performance goes on everyday, so the lads take turns to have one of their heads shaved each day. The lads and girls of the team think that the performances are lack of respect to their ancestors, but they would still making a living out of it.



1. Many tourists come from afar to see this mysterious tribe.
2. Gun Yuanliang's home with photos sent from photographers.
3. The new cement road and village gate open up an external passage for Basha.
4. Gun Yuanliang and his hackbuteer team used to live a peaceful life.

1

An admission tickets to Basha is sold at ¥10. After paying one yuan of publicity administration fee, the rest of nine yuan will be Bashared by the performance team. There are few tourists to Basha except the three golden-week holidays. The team has to wait for performance at the gate of the village every day. They don't have much income and have no time to take care of the farm work, so there is much complaint. Those households without anyone in the performance team are also not happy as they cannot take any Bashare in the admission ticket income and think it unfair. The officials has realised that the problems is a bit serious and have had several discussions with the village committees and the performance team, but they are still not able to work out a better solution.

Gun Yuanliang gains nothing from the admission tickets, but as the captain of the hackbuteer team, he has inevitably become the target. He feels afflictive but cannot find anyone who would listen to his complaints. So he has the intention to leave his hometown to work somewhere else. He recently heard that travel companies in Hainan are recruiting some Basha hunter men to give performance there. Gun Yuanliang has signed up. Perhaps, he will finally leave Basha where he was born and brought up.

What will Be the Future of the Basha People?

Nowadays, cities in China are developing at an amazing speed, while the ancient countryside are also changed by the cities. The peace, nature, romance, poet—like scenery and the pure, kind and passionate folkway in the ancient countryside have become the unreachable and past dreams.

Under the influence of a new exotic culture, the Miao nationality tribe of Basha that used to be enclosed deep in the mountains, just like other minority villages in the mountainous prefectures of Guizhou Province, will inevitably exposed to all kinds of impacts. In fact, Basha has already started its inevitable and unprecedented transformation.

1. Gun Yuanliang, his son Gun Ji yuan and wife Wang Mei
2. Members of the hackbuteer team play the Lusheng instrument and dance to welcome the tourist. This has become one of the performance programs in the village.
3. Every Basha people is a professional in playing the Lusheng instrument. The Lusheng instrument they make with thick bamboo have a primitive taste.
4. Gun Yuanliang sits in an urban bus and looks at the busy and prosperous world outside the window with confusion.

Profile of Basha

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Now about 2,000 Basha people are populated in the five villages in the forests at Yueliang Mountain foot at Congjiang County in Southeastern Guizhou Miao Dong Autonomous Prefecture.

Basha men with bobs on their heads are the outstanding representatives of their tribal spirit. Each Basha boy must go through the hair-bundling coming-of-age ceremony before being recognised by the tribe.

Though the war is far gone from Basha, up till now, Basha men are still proud of being martial. They always carry their sporting gun and are all sharp-shooters. Therefore the Basha tribe is all called the Tribe of Hunter. Basha men are all good at climbing mountains and trees. They are strong and powerful hunters. Hunting is not only for making a living but also a practice of battle. Spirits of martial masters are still the pride of Basha men as if their ancestors' souls still remain in their bodies.

4

ECCENTRICS OF THE WORLD

[illegible]

Three years ago, I travelled to Tibet from Kunming on my bicycle, and completed a journey that changed my life. Later, I went to many places and met many eccentrics. Though they travelled in different ways, they all share the same passion — experiencing life and achieving personal dream.

Modern Paladin

AJIAN

Ajian is an eccentric who travels by bicycle. When he was only 12 years old, he travelled to Tiananmen Square from Guangdong. At the age of 14, he went to Xi'an by bicycle. Three years ago, I met him in Lhasa. Ajian decorates his bike with his own fashion — a beautiful hawk feather on the bike and backpack. Three years has passed since we met, but his style remains the same.

Though Ajian dresses like a "hero", he is easy going and low profile. The feather on his bicycle was taken from the hawk nest by himself. There is also a quiver filled with arrows in his backpack. He made a sharp-edged "weapon" which an be used both as bow and spear. Ajian is just like a knight. Once when travelling with several girls in Tibet, he met four Tibetan men who were rude to the girls. Ajian jumped out and fought off these Tibetans.

Ajian travelled between Yunnan and Tibet by bicycle for six times. He also travelled the Sichuan-Tibet, Qinghai-Tibet and Xinjiang-Tibet highways. Once when Ajian was running out of money, he made mops for fifty cents for each. He also appeared TV or radio programmes.

Ajian is famous among Chinese travellers, especially on the Internet. His followers are everywhere. But Ajian is mostly alone, walking in the wild, or silently expressing his desire to return to nature under the starry night. If you happen to meet him on the road, he will really appreciate a pack of cigarette.

The Tender

REVOLUTION

It was in a hotel in Shangri-la, Yunnan, when my friends and I met "Geming" (means revolution), a Tibetan driver from Lhasa. Started from Lhasa, after four days of driving, in Shangri-la, he lived in the same room with us. His destination was Lijiang, where he would pick up two Hong Kong girls. When I met him, I wondered if "Geming" was his real name. He then proved it by showing us his ID card. Since he was born in the age of red revolution, his parents gave him this special name. I asked Geming to give me his mobile number and told him that I would meet him after arriving at Lhasa.

It took me a month to get to Lhasa. Would Geming still remember me? I dialed his number and he was delighted. "On my way back to Lhasa", he cried over the phone, "I was expecting to meet you... we must have missed somewhere." Later, Geming drove to the hotel we stayed, and took us to dinner. That was the best meal since I started my journey.

Geming speaks the best mandarin among all the Tibetan I have met. His warm-heartedness made the two Hong Kong girls cried when they went home. Geming recalled, "They are sophisticated, and they are good girls!" He smiled to us childishly, "It was a pity you miss my car, otherwise you could have met them!" The girls frequently called him after returning home, and invited him to Hong Kong for several times. Geming was embarrassed because he had a family and could not do all what he wanted to. "Actually, I long to visit Hong Kong," he said.

Winter was coming, Geming and his jeep were still expecting tourists, since his kids were in school. His warmness and passion were just like his name. "Where can I find a warm-hearted person like you?" The two Hong Kong girls once said.

Engine in Plateau

Liang Shangkun

Liang is from Hong Kong. We met when climbing the Anjiula Mountain (altitude: 4,800 m). He appeared to be riding a motorcycle when we saw him from far. After approaching, we found that he was riding a bike. We were pleasantly surprised as we met such a "fellow". Soon, we greeted each other. "Oh, you get a guitar with you, it is romantic." Liang said. He started the journey from Lanzhou, and had already completed the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, and was advancing to Yunnan-Tibet Highway from Sichuan.

Liang rides very fast, he estimates that his average speed is over 100 km a day. On the Qinghai-Tibet Road, we always camped on a ground covered by snow. I wanted to chat more with him, but his journey was rush, and he had to prepare for climbing Yela Mountain. After taking a photo with us, he left. Later, I told my friends, "Riding 100 km a day, he is the engine on plateau."

The Big-Stomach "David"

Luo Ke

Luo Ke is from west Australia. He had travelled by bicycle for one year and eight months when we knew him. He bought a new bicycle in Kunming and had visited the whole Southeast Asia. Later, he learned martial art in Dali, Yunnan, then he went to Tibet alone by bicycle. Finally, Luo Ke got into Tibet secretly without the permit.

Bangda was the place we met. In order to escape from the policeman, Luo Ke always camped in remote places. He was very hungry when we met. He asked us to leave first and he would catch up with us after having his meal.

From Bangda to Basu, we must cross Yela Mountains. After crossing the mountain, it began to snow. We could only set a fire in a cave and waited for Luo Ke, who was eating at the foot of the mountain. When Luo Ke caught up with us, it snowed heavily. After greeting each other, Luo Ke asked us in the snow, "Do you have any religion?" "No, we don't, and you?" "No, but I was interested in Buddhism, because it could calm my mind" "Then would you embrace Buddhism?" "No, no, I just wanted to know it. Buddhism is important for learning oriental culture." "Would you feel puzzled and dispossessed if you did not have religion?" At this time, the snows fell still heavier. Luo Ke stood in the snow, and said after a while, "May be..." Then we headed to Yela Mountain. Snow pricked our faces and hands, though it was very painful, no one said anything till we crossed the mountain.

After arriving Basu County, Luo Ke revealed his "ability" in a Shandong dumpling restaurant. He could eat more than 50 dumplings. After eating, he said, "It was really delicious!"

We settled in a hotel in Basu County. In the next morning, Luo Ke had two bowls of noodles, which surprised us again. During the way from Basu to Ranwu, Luo Ke set off first. When reached Ranwu Lake, we met him again. He was eating in a restaurant. The plates on his table looked like a hill, and the soup in the plate was also eaten up. I secretly named Luo Ke "David" (pronounced the same as "Big Stomach" in Mandarin). Later, when we started to Naigu Glacier, Luo Ke also walked first. From then on, we had no more news about him.

Luo Ke's Plan: Yunnan- Tibet - Nepal - India - Europe. All the best for brave Luo Ke!

Travelling with a Handcart

LI WENJUA

Crossed the 4,230 m Lawu Mountain, I got to Zhuka Bridge, on my journey from Mangkang to Zuogong. When we walked towards the bridge, one person was waving to us in the middle of the road with a handcart. After stopping, we were surprised, because we met a real "hero" — Li Wenjun, who travelled in China with an iron handcart.

Li Wenjun was born in Huai'an, Jiangsu Province. He is over 40 yeas old, and had travelled for over one year with his iron handcart. Besides the tires, other parts were made of iron and steel, even the canopy. Pushing it is very difficult, since it weighs more than 160 kg. I asked him why he did not make it with wood. "Because iron is more solid," he answered.

His next destination was Yunnan, taking the Yunnan-Tibet Highway. Because the iron handcart was really too heavy, he could only walk for seven kilometres everyday. He was tired, but he was very happy. The handcart was his mobile home, where he ate, drank and slept. I asked if he needed any help. He answered that he would like some wine, and I said we didn't drink. When we were talking, a Tibetan old man stood beside us. He understood Chinese and found us very interesting. Later, we asked him to take a photo with us and he agreed gladly. After leaving Li Wenjun, we rushed to the deep Lancang River. I saw the yellow cyclone beside the road which reached the sky.

Yunnan Hong Kong Comedy Star

NIMA

Nima was a driver in Deqin County of Yunnan. When we met him, he had just finished his job of taking five Frenchmen to Lhasa. Since the jeep carried a Yunnan License, it drew my attention, and I soon noticed the fat driver with a cap enjoying his cigarette. At that time, we were just back from Langkazi County to Lhasa. We would have to beg if we continue the journey to Yunnan since we had no money! Therefore, I bargained with Nima. He looked familiar, but I couldn't recall where we met. When we were chatting, his smile reminded me of the Hong Kong comedy star. From then on, we called Nima "Uncle Tat".

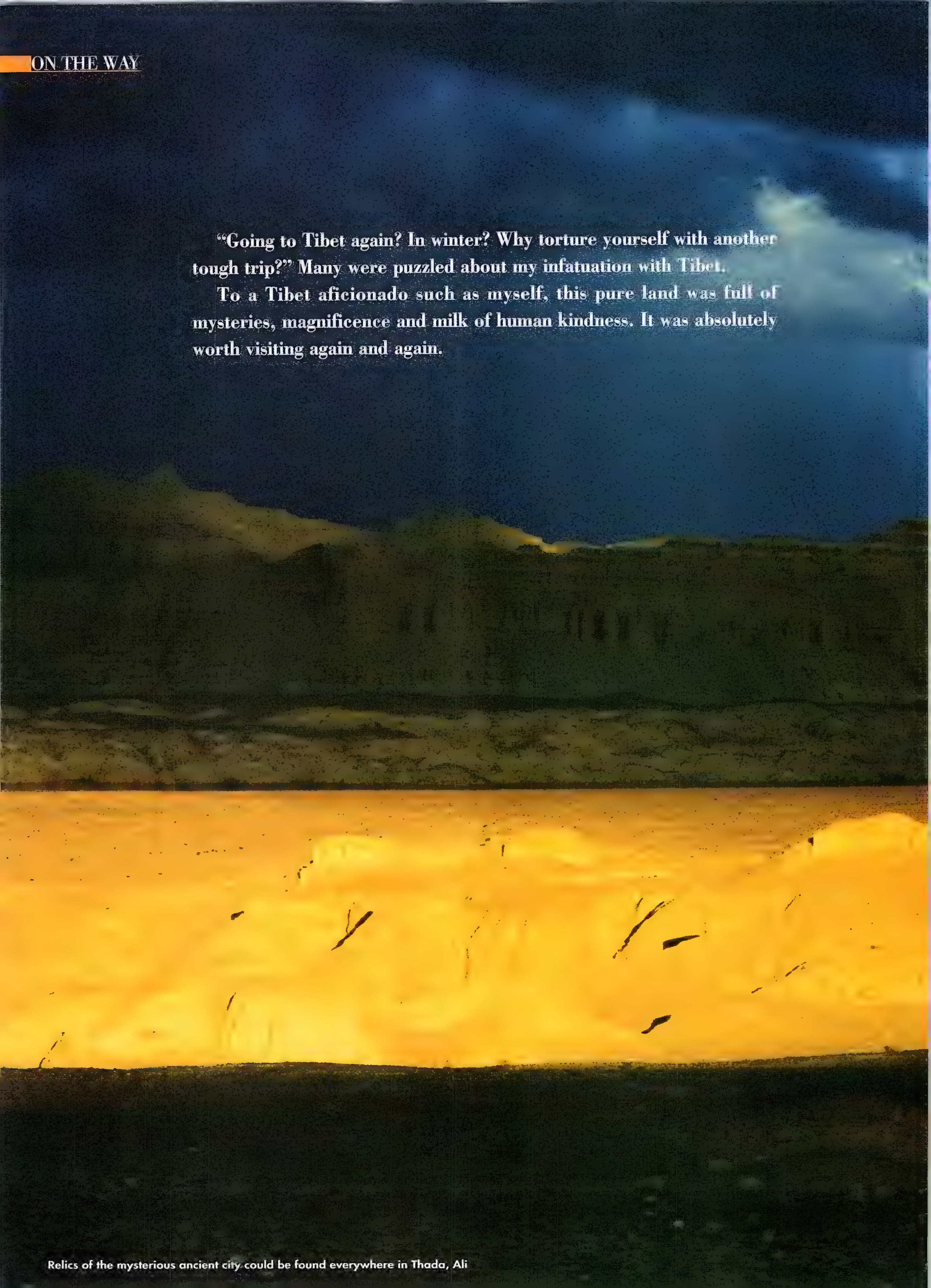
Yet Uncle Tat helped us a lot. One day, we arrived the hot spring in Salt Well in the afternoon and could not find the administrator. So we jumped into the pool and swam. We were then caught by the administrator and were going to be fined. Uncle Tat rushed out, talking to him in Tibetan. We were saved finally. He kept laughing in his bed that night.

Four days passed, we arrived Deqin County. On the road, Uncle Tat told us a story. He had a cousin who was a carrier for China-Japan Expedition Team for Kawagebo Peak of Meili Snow Mountain in 1990. He had followed them during their adventure. When the team was about to climb the peak, someone asked him to fetch the camera. He then went down the mountain and escaped from the second biggest mountain-climbing tragedy in the world. None of the members from the expedition team survived. His cousin got depressed for a long time and always prostrated himself facing Kawagebo Peak.

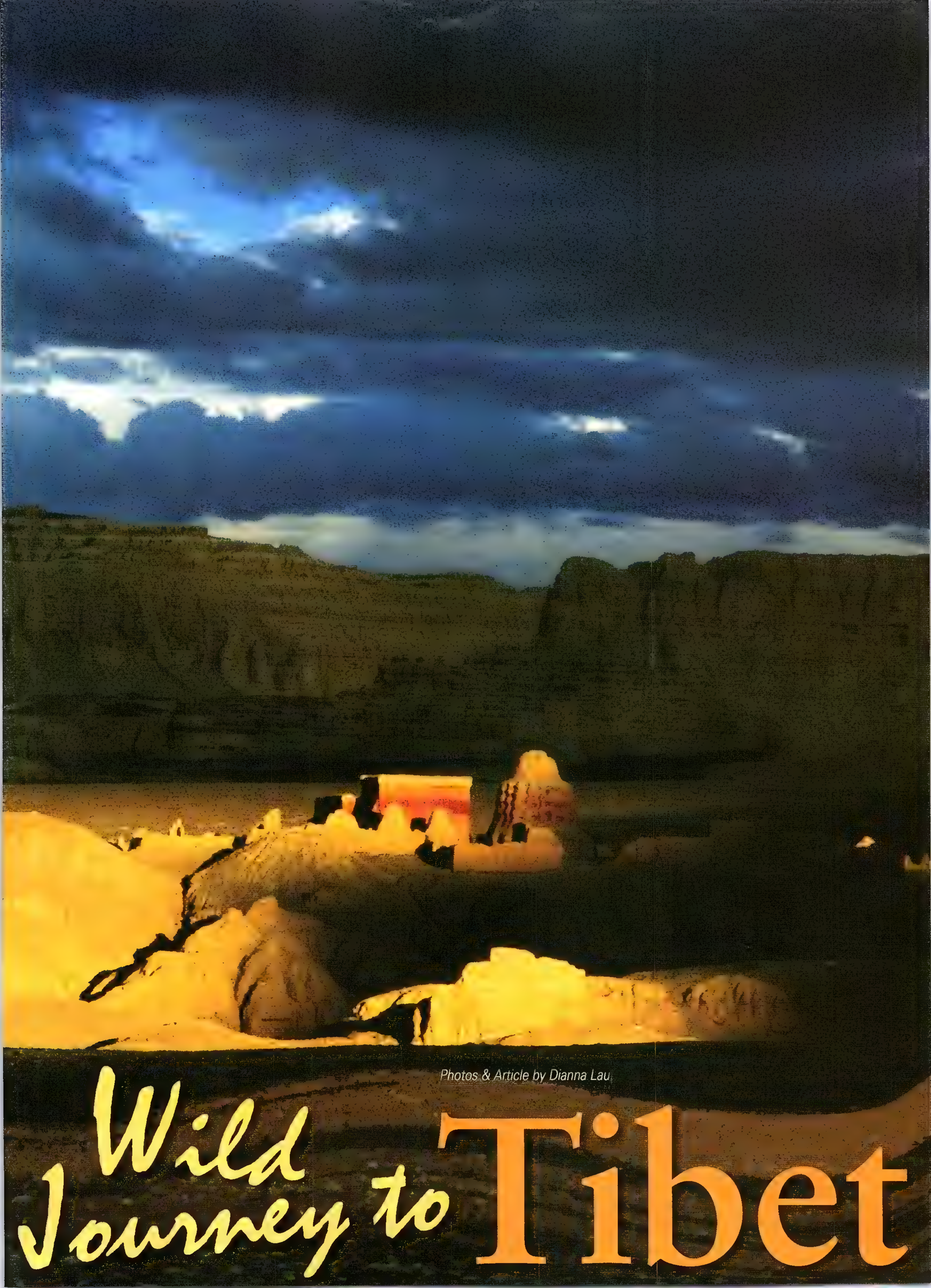
Thanks to Uncle Tat, the sky above Meili Snow Mountain is blue and clear. We experienced the grandeur of the holy mountain and were deeply touched. When we apart, Uncle Tat gave us his card. "Call me if you want to hire my jeep," he said.

"Going to Tibet again? In winter? Why torture yourself with another tough trip?" Many were puzzled about my infatuation with Tibet.

To a Tibet aficionado such as myself, this pure land was full of mysteries, magnificence and milk of human kindness. It was absolutely worth visiting again and again.



Relics of the mysterious ancient city could be found everywhere in Thada, Ali



Wild Journey to Tibet

Photos & Article by Dianna Lau

Story of Lhasa

The saying, "there is nothing new under the sun", does not apply to Lhasa. There are countless exotic people from all walks of life gathered in this Sun City everyday to embark upon their own marvelous journey.

JEANSWEST
真 維 斯

GIORDANO
佐 丹 奴

bossini 堡狮龙
BaLeNO
班尼路
BALENO

Secularised Little Monk

Unexpectedly, the temperature in the city was between 0°C and 5°C even after a heavy snow. It was not very cold. There were not many tourists in Tibet during winter. All I saw were herdsmen coming here for pilgrimage or gallivanting around. They were packed as close as herrings in Bakuo Street and Da Zhao Temple, bustling with noise and excitement.

At both Da Zhao Temple Square and Potala Palace, I could see believers from all over the world. And I could spend days just sitting there and watching people around me.

"It's Evil of Me to Take Money."

When I was enjoying the sunshine and eating chestnut, a young and skinny monk spoke to me in fluent Putonghua, "Auntie, was this the first time you come to Lhasa?"

The little monk was named Gesang. He was a Tibetan from Ganzi, Sichuan province. He was fourteen but had become a monk for six years. He said that he could not bear to see people lusting after material wealth and believe such effort would be in vain. It was his first pilgrimage in Tibet. He and his pals had agreed to set out together, yet they failed to keep an appointment. As a result, he had to come to Tibet alone on foot due to the lack of traveling expenses. The journey had taken him more than four months and three pairs of shoes.

I looked at my thousand-yuan runner and suddenly ashamed of myself. This young boy, without fear of hardship, walked all the way here for months to reach his sacred goal. But I flew here only for basking.

He also told me, "I have kowtowed for 60,000 times at Da Zhao Temple yesterday. I may go back home on foot tomorrow." I saw his scuffed palms. He also said that the people in the hostel and other palmers were kind enough to gave him a discount on rental. And now that his goal was accomplished, he intended to go home as soon as possible. While looking at his slender body, I could not imagine how he could make his way to home in such snowing days. Holding back my tears, I gave him ¥50 and asked him to take care of himself. With my money in his hands, tears welled up from his eyes. He said, "It's too evil for me to take money from others." I left the money with him and took off in a hurry.

Ten Thousand Kowtows for You!

The encounter with the little monk made me uneasy for the whole night. I felt that I could do more for him. For example, I could show him around before his return and eat some tasty food, or could give him some presents. After dinner, I came to Da Zhao Temple and looked for him by searching for the hostel to which he had made reference. But to my disappointment, I could not find him and had to leave.

At the next dusk, I wandered in Bakou Street along with Tibetans. A familiar sound was made behind me, "Auntie, we meet again!" It was so lucky that little Gesang still did not go back home. We kept chatting and wandering in Bakou Street. There were three pedestrian streets in Lhasa: Nangkou (in Da Zhao Temple), Bakou (around Da Zhao Temple) and Lin Lang (around Yao Wang Mountain, the Potala Palace, Xiao Zhao Temple and the whole old city zone). The numerous keepsakes along the street were really dazzling. But be sure to walk clockwise so that you would not be stricken down by the crowd.

Then I noticed Gesang's skimpy clothes. So I bought him a cotton coat. He looked a little overjoyed, "I had kowtowed for 60,000 times and I would send 10,000 times to you!" I had never received such a generous gift that I was all adrift. But I told him to keep that for his family members. He then patted his chest and said, "Just accepted it. I had another 50, 000!"

Before saying good-bye, Gesang and I agreed to meet at Da Zhao Temple Square the next day.

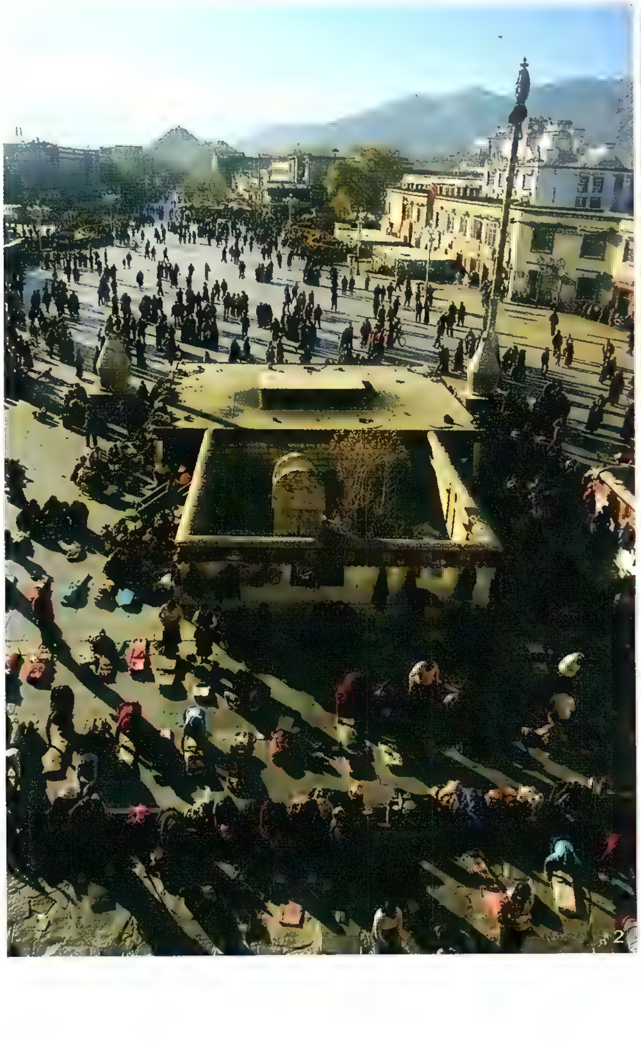
An Offering to Buddha

At early morning 8:00 a.m., Gesang and I took the bus to Gan Dan Temple on time. Before setting out, I had known that the annual Lamping Day (the 25th day of October in Tibetan calendar, or the first ten days of December in Gregorian calendar) was coming. That was the day for commemorating the pass-away of Tsong Khapa, the founder of Gelugpa School. Founded by Master Tsong Khapa in 1407 (rebuilt in 1993), Gan Dan Temple was the key temple of Gelugpa School (Yellow Hat Sect). The magnificent temple was located at the hillside of Wangguer Mountain with an elevation of 3,800 m. It was the first time for me to visit here. I had expected to appreciate the traditional festival ritual.

One hour later, the bus slowly drove up the hillside. All at once, the passengers on the bus got off hats and greeted to the distance. Then I found that Gan Dan Temple, which was standing erect on the mountain, began to show up her contour.

In the afternoon, Gesang and I looked around along with

1. The Potala Palace is the ultimate destination for palmers.
2. Overlooking the believers prostrating in front of Da Zhao Temple from its top
3. The monk, who was 14 years old, told me that he had spent him more than five months to kowtow for 60,000 times.
4. Young monks and shoeblacks can be found everywhere in Lhasa.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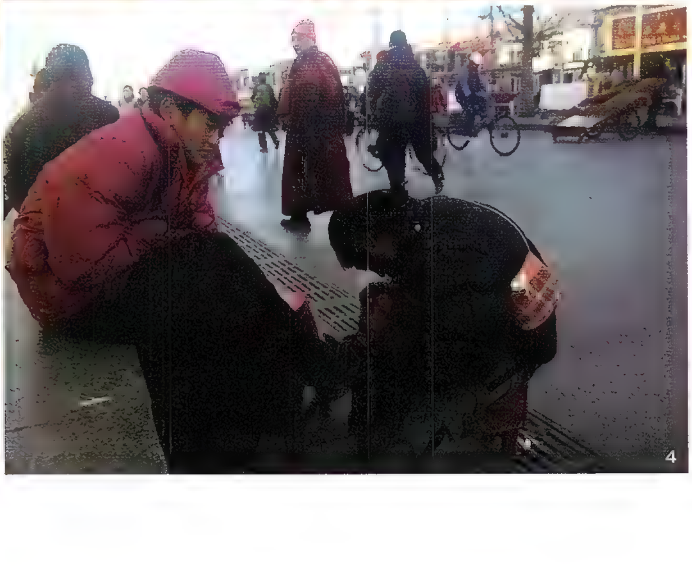
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other Tibetans. We at first came into the golden statue hall, in which stood the huge statue of Tsong Khapa. It happened that the Lamas in the temple began to sing morning matin in solemn atmosphere. Most of the Tibetans coming into the temple would bring the following things: kha-btags (for Buddha statue), ghee (for the huge ghee lamp in the hall) and small changes (for offering to the statue). As compared with those for the Buddha statue, I found I had only a small number of changes. An old hand was a good guide. Little Gesang helped me make changes with a big banknote. He changed it with the fractions heaping in front of the statue. One ¥10-bill was changed into one hundred 10-cent notes. We immediately shared them and made offerings in the hall as if we were in a amusement park.

Tsong Khapa Yinling Tower, which stood beside the gold statue hall, was a must for our visit. All believers prostrated themselves before the holy tower and the statues of Tsong Khapa and his followers in devotion. Then we visited Sutra Printing Yard and Tsong Khapa's bedroom. The banknotes in hands were given out. When I gave changes to Gesang for the last time, he looked uneasy and said in disaffection, "One day, I will eventually make alms with my own money. I will earn a lot of money and would give each Buddha statue ¥100 as offering!"

Coming out of the halls, we encircled the hillside in a clock-wise direction. The boundless scenery made me carefree and joyous. The sight after snowing was too beautiful. About one hour later, we came to the cave where Tsong Khapa once lived in seclusion. Its environment was perfect. The master had a great foresight.

The Solemn Gan Dan Temple

It was the eve of Lamping Day that Gesang and I visited Gan Dan Temple. Although I found no traces of celebration, I did not give up. The next day I visited there again. When I got to the parking lot of the temple, huge crowds of people were there. This time I did not enter into the temple along with the crowds, but climbed up the mountainside right in front of it. After more than one hour, I came to the peak covered with pennants. Overlooking Gan Dan Temple from the peak, I felt overwhelmed by the solemn atmosphere.

I hurried down the peak when I saw crowds gathering in front of the temple and it was nearly noon. I returned to the entrance after half an hour. Soon after clarion sounded, groups of monks carrying were presenting the huge Tangka. The swift-footed arrived first. Unexpectedly, I could stand at the best location for taking a view. The monks put the Tangka to the roof of the temple and slowly rolled it down. The brilliant golden canvas opened by inchmeal while the monks were reciting scriptures. The Tangka was the portrait of Master Tsong Khapa. All people closed their palms and mumbled. Quite a number of women were in tears.

In the evening, there were also many celebrations in the city zone of Lhasa. Lamps were lit on the roofs and windowsills of all temples and residences to commemorate Master Tsong Khapa. When I was strolling along Bakuo Street as usual, to my surprise, I met Gesang again. So we looked around together. That day crowds of people were packed in the street, as if it were the Spring Festival. The difference was that all shops closed up earlier. Only some paddlers were hawking lanterns and decorations in the street. It became ever busier when the night had fallen. Every household lit candles in varied shapes in front of windows, just like Christmas. Da Zhao Temple Square was filled with a sea of people. Monks were blowing long horns at the top of the temple roof and believers were prostrating themselves before the temple. The burning incense at the centre of the square was particularly vigorous. People dropped mulberry branches into incense burners. The spot was noisy and confused. No wonder a large number of police wagons and fire engines were stand-by for close vicinity.

Simple and Naive

I passed Da Zhao Temple Square on another day and found someone in the basking crowd holding high a paper board indicating "Lhasa→Yushu→Ganzi". I soon thought of Gesang and asked about these privately owned buses. That man was a Dongfeng truck driver and planned to set out as soon as he picked up enough passengers. The fare was ¥150 and it only took four days to get to Ganzi. Four days! That was great! Then Gesang needed not to walk home.

In the afternoon, I found Gesang at the entrance to Bakuo Street and immediately told him the good news, asking him to go home soon. At parting, Gesang and I exchanged addresses for contact. Then we again strolled along Bakuo Street. He took me to some temples in the ancient town to worship Buddha. He took out a pendant of sleeping Buddha statue in Da Zhao Temple and sent it to me as a souvenir. He exhorted me, "You were going on a journey alone. Take care of yourself at every turn. You are too simple and prone to believe in others. There are evildoers in the world too!" Though I was made between tears and smiles by him, I was moved.

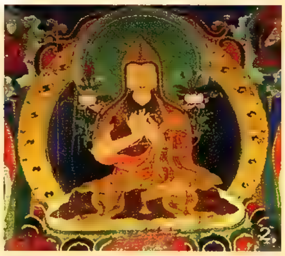
In the evening, I gave him ¥100 as travelling expenses. I believed that the truck driver would treat him preferentially and would take care of him. Blankly, little Gesang had the big note and left without saying a word.

A Smoking Monk

To my surprise, I found Gesang on Bakuo Street again two days later. He told me that he had known two countrymen in the hostel, and that he would go back home with them so that they could look after each other. After that time, I saw him trying on a pair of sunglasses in a shop. He escaped before I entered the shop and greeted him. From then on, I had completely lost his trace.

Until I returned from Ali, I wanted to ask about him. Before departing from Lhasa, I hit upon the young shoeblack who knew Gesang. He told me, "That monk slinked out from a temple. He had secularised and learned to smoke!" I felt a dull pain in mind and regretted that such a clever and kind child had not a good environment for growth. That little Gesang had secularised and learned to smoke was not important to me. The more important was that he was just a child and should have a better life!

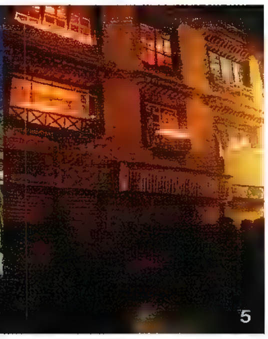
Tsong Khapa — The Founder of Yellow Hat Sect



Tsong Khapa (A.D. 1357 - 1419) was the founder of Tibetan Buddhism Gelugpa School (also known as Yellow Hat Sect). He was born in Qinghai Province. When he was 17, he went to Tibet to study Buddhism. With famous teachers' instruction, he finally became a learned master. Seeing that the religious disciplines for clergy ceased to be binding and became lax, he then conceived a plan to carry out reform, calling for strictly abiding by disciplines and establishing Gelugpa School. The doctrine was developed on the basis of Gedang School, which was founded by Atisha Master. He stood for that sutra study must follow the prescribed order, i.e. firstly Exoteric Buddhism and then Tantra Esoteric Buddhism. The master wrote Bodhi Order Theory (based on Bodhi Order Torch Theory by Atisha Master), Tantra Esoteric Buddhism Order and other works.

Though Gelugpa School was the latest school, it had become the biggest and most influential religious school in Tibetan Buddhism. The temples in Tibet generally offered sacrifice to the statues of Tsong Khapa and his followers. Tibetan's respect for Tsong Khapa was second only to Shakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism. The day Tsong Khapa passed away (the 25th day of October in Tibetan calendar) had become one of the most important festivals for local people — Lamping Day.

1. Bird's view of Gan Dan Temple from the top of a hill
2. Master Tsong Khapa
3. Little Gesang put money into the wire netting at the entrance as the offering for the temple.
4. Tangka sunning ceremony is held on each Lamping Day at Gan Dan Temple.
5. Every household lighted candles to commemorate Master Tsong Khapa in the evening of Lamping Day.



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Tibet through My Eyes — Ang Sang

In the past, I could not help looking up to that yellow house (Majiami Restaurant) when I was strolling along Bakuo Street. Now, there stood a big signboard in the northeast corner with red and white characters on black background: Art Gallery Gedunchoephel. The art gallery was built by more than 100 painters in 2003 on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Gedunchoephel, who was called "a generation of dignitary and Tibetan scholar". It was the only art gallery in Lhasa.

2

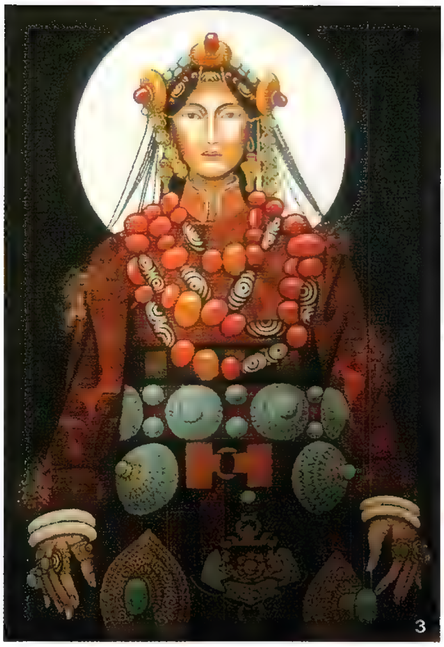
Ang Sang was a member of the art gallery. He was born in Lhasa. When he was young, he went to Beijing to study dance and served as a dancer for several years. At last, he gave up dancing and was recruited by the art department of Tibet University. He spent three years on studying art and one year on painting Tangka. Since his graduation in 1988, his works, rich with national features, had been well received. He once bore the palm in the Tibetan art exhibition held in Beijing. In 1992, he participated in the Chinese minority art exhibition held in Japan and all his works were packed away. The people coming to the art gallery in Bakuo Street to enjoy Ang Sang's works were from all over the world, including those from Japan, Europe, U. S. and Nepal.

Ang Sang was also a costume designer for a chorus. He painted in his spare time. He wished to spread Tibetan culture through art.

The Colour of Tibetan Religions

Due to the ardent love for the nation, he drew the subject matters full of Tibetan features: figures of Buddha, yak, sheep, eagle, Tibetan women, etc. As he specialised in Tibetan costumes, he had a series of works with the clothes for the women in different Tibet regions. Sometimes he drew herds and shepherdess, expressing the harmonious coexistence of mankind and the nature and highlighting a beauty of kindness. The works often showed the painter's respect for cattle and eagle. These creatures closely bounded up with the lives of Tibetans represent a spiritual state in depth. Particularly, eagle was considered as the bridge between the world and land of promise by Tibetans and always bore the holy task guiding the dead to the heaven.

Many of Ang Sang's works were rich in religious colours. The models of Buddha including thousand-hand-thousand-eye Avalokitesvara and Buddha eyes were numerous. These paintings feeled like the frescos in temple and appeared to be holy and stately. Ang Sang said, "Religious is an indispensable for Tibetan culture. Without religion, Tibet will be quite different." I imagined what Lhasa would be like without Da Zhao Temple, the Potala Palace and those devout believers prostrating and strolling along Bakuo Street. Would the place be filled with teahouses, antique vendors, chain fashion stores or fast food restaurants? Would Tibet develop as the next hottest tourist destination, bringing in ¥1.3 billion annually?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The Endless Inspiration from Lhasa

"Lhasa was the wellspring for my creation. The inspiration was from the nature, Bakuo Street and people. It was hard to find an environment like these. For me, the cadence of the life in metropolises was too pressing and was devoid of space. I once saw an old man who was disowned by children and was crying bitterly in Chengdu. Something like that would never happen in Tibet!" Ang Sang Said.

Hearing Ang Sang's passion for Lhasa, I thought that he was a conservative creator who had been spoiled by the sun of the highland. But when I saw his works created in the last two years, I found that this easygoing Lhasa citizen had the courage to try new techniques. His series of new works were refreshing. On the narrow and small image planes, Ang Sang combined two different faces with nearly black and white colours. The left might be Picasso or Egyptian queen while the right was a Tibetan or an ox head. He even added some Tibetan texts or symbols of fashionable brand as embroideries. He said that the concept of this style originated from the half-Buddha-half-King-Kong masks in temples. He desired to integrate the Tibetan culture into the ancient and modern cultures in the world. Recently, he had received a number of indents from Nepal. Even some art gallery owners from U.K. came to buy his paintings.

1. **Artist Ang Sang's atelier was filled with the sunshine of the highland.**
2. **Ang Sang wished to spread Tibetan culture through his works.**
3. **Brilliant and gorgeous traditional costumes of Tibetan women**
4. **The art gallery in Bakou Street**
5. **The works mixed with different cultures and modern elements**

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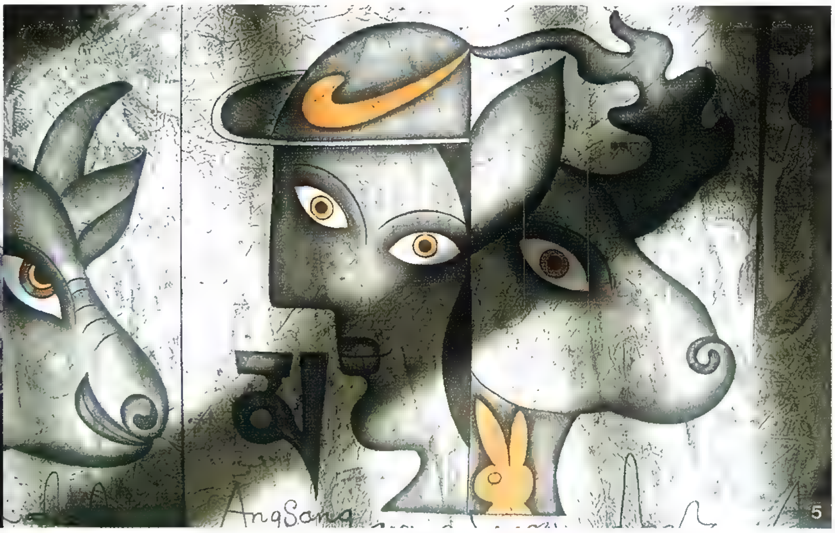

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季吉畈纳 坊吧
messenger workshop
绘画、瑜珈
style
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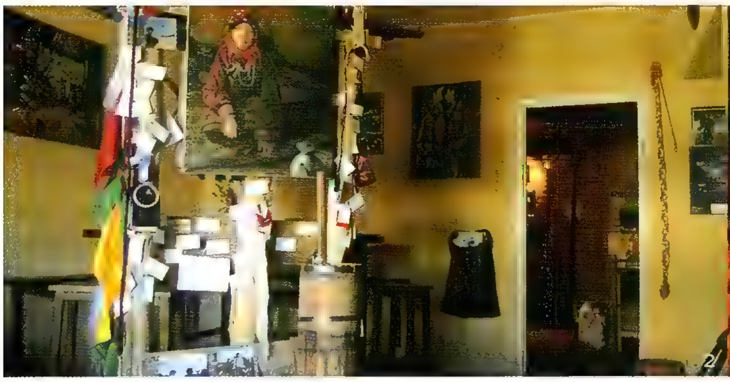
1

Dream Searching in Jijipona

Curiously, I walked into a Tibetan style residence by following an obscure direction board. I went directly to the second floor, ignoring the bad odour from the public toilet on the ground. I turned around the corner as indicated by that arrow head and came to the end of the hall. Finally I found Jijipona, a foothold for the alternative world.

Upon stepping in Jijipona, I felt like I had come to my friend's home. A kind lad (Xiao Xie) in smiles said that I had come too early (3:30 p.m.) and that the bar would not open until 6:00 p.m., but he welcomed me to look around.

After passing the bar at the entrance, I came to the main hall where two rows of seats were arranged with one against the window and one against the wall. There was also a computer that connected to the Internet. A Tibetan side-room accommodating more than ten people and a projection booth closed to the main hall. A professional projector was showing the movie Kekexili. Xiao Xie proudly told me, "We had a very poor projector in the past. Later a friend teaching in Lhasa from Beijing could not bear such a poor effect anymore. So he brought here a much more advanced projector. The movies shown here are also brought by guests for sharing." Xiao Xie said that this bar had only opened for less than half a year. The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owner did not intend to make money but only to maintain a space for those attached to Tibet to hang out. So the bar merely operated in the evening and only offered simple drinks. For other food, you need to buy from the outside.

Much Ado about Nothing

Xiao Xie was from Fujian Province. The reason for his coming to Lhasa was a love affair.

"I once worked in a hydraulic power station in my hometown. Before that I had never thought of coming to Tibet. I travelled to Fuzhou before but I was still depressed. One of my friends advised me to come to Tibet and spoke of Ms Liao Qin — my present employer. I just wanted to change an environment and therefore I came here. That's the first time I met Ms Liao. We chimed in with each other easily. So I left here to operate the bar for here and help her prepare some plans."

Xiao Xie said that the current life was quite well. The ease of Lhasa allowed him to feel at home. Furthermore, he had acquainted with a large number of interesting friends in the bar.

Stayed Because of Love!

In Lhasa, lots of people knew Liao Qin — an outstanding lady came from Chongqing and got married in Tibet. There were too many stories about Liao Qin. She had been the focus of the media of the inland. She came to Lhasa more than ten years ago for the first time. She came here for painting. But she failed to paint just because the sceneries were too beautiful. Eight years ago, a friend introduced a man from Namucuo to her. They got married soon. From then on, Liao Qin stayed in Lhasa because of love.

In one evening, I visited Jijipona again. I happened to see Liao Qin there. That day was Liao Qin's birthday. She excitedly told everyone that she had just bought a colt as the present for her fifth birthday. In that evening we kept chatting about her past, beliefs, and her fitting in the Tibetan culture. She dreamt of establishing a base camp for self-driving travel in Tibet and doing more charity works for Lhasa (she taught some blind teenagers painting several years ago).

In Tibetan, Jijipona means the messenger of spring. Everyone who had known Liao Qin agreed that she was like spring, bringing the people warmth and life.

Hope Corner!

On the eve of my setting out from Lhasa, I came to Jijipona again. In that evening, the bar was particularly lively. There were no empty seats in the side room. Many strangers were holding a meeting in Putonghua, Tibetan and English, discussing how to fulfill and carry out their concept — establishing a voluntary organisation called Hope Corner. The conception rooted from Ms Ciji from Tibet. She said, "When I was very young, everyone used to play mah-jong. Now I was back from U.S, and I had found that there were much more entertainments in Lhasa. But drinking, playing mah-jong and electronic games were still quite common. My friends and I wished to help the children and teenagers. I believed that there were lots of kind people in the world were willing to help others while lots of people need assistance. Yet there was not a bridge between them. I would like to be that role. For a big city like Lhasa, though we only play a small part, we can be a corner of hope."

There were foreigners, Tibetans and Hans in the meeting, such as bank clerk, architect, medical student, college English teacher and nongovernmental organizational (NGO) members. The discussed topics include site location, activities planning and funds collection, etc.

I also shared my opinions. I advised them to arrange some tourist routes rich in local features with local young people as tourist guides so that they could facilitate the knowledge on their own culture, improve linguistic competence and earn operating funds.

Whatever Hope Corner will be, I was sure the dreamer would embrace the realisation of the dream one day.

1. **Jijipona located on the way to Tibet Hospital**
2. **Jijipona bar is as warm as a household.**
3. **Liao Qin (right), the owner of the bar, was an energetic and talkative person.**
4. **Guests like to bring movies and share them with friends**
5. **Xiao Xie, who was from Fujian, adapts himself to the new living in Lhasa well.**
6. **Hope Corner, established by a group of warmhearted people, was holding a meeting.**

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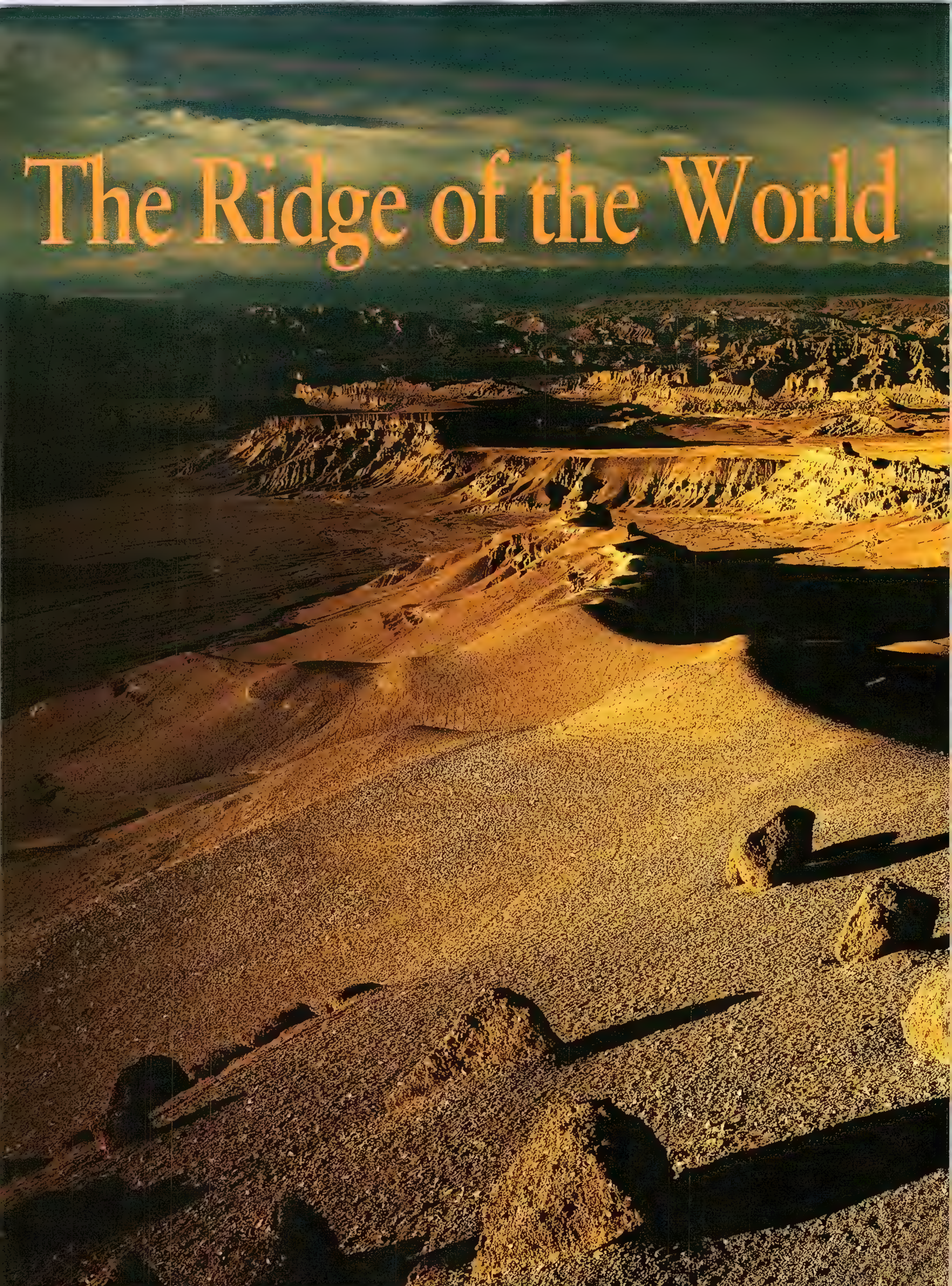
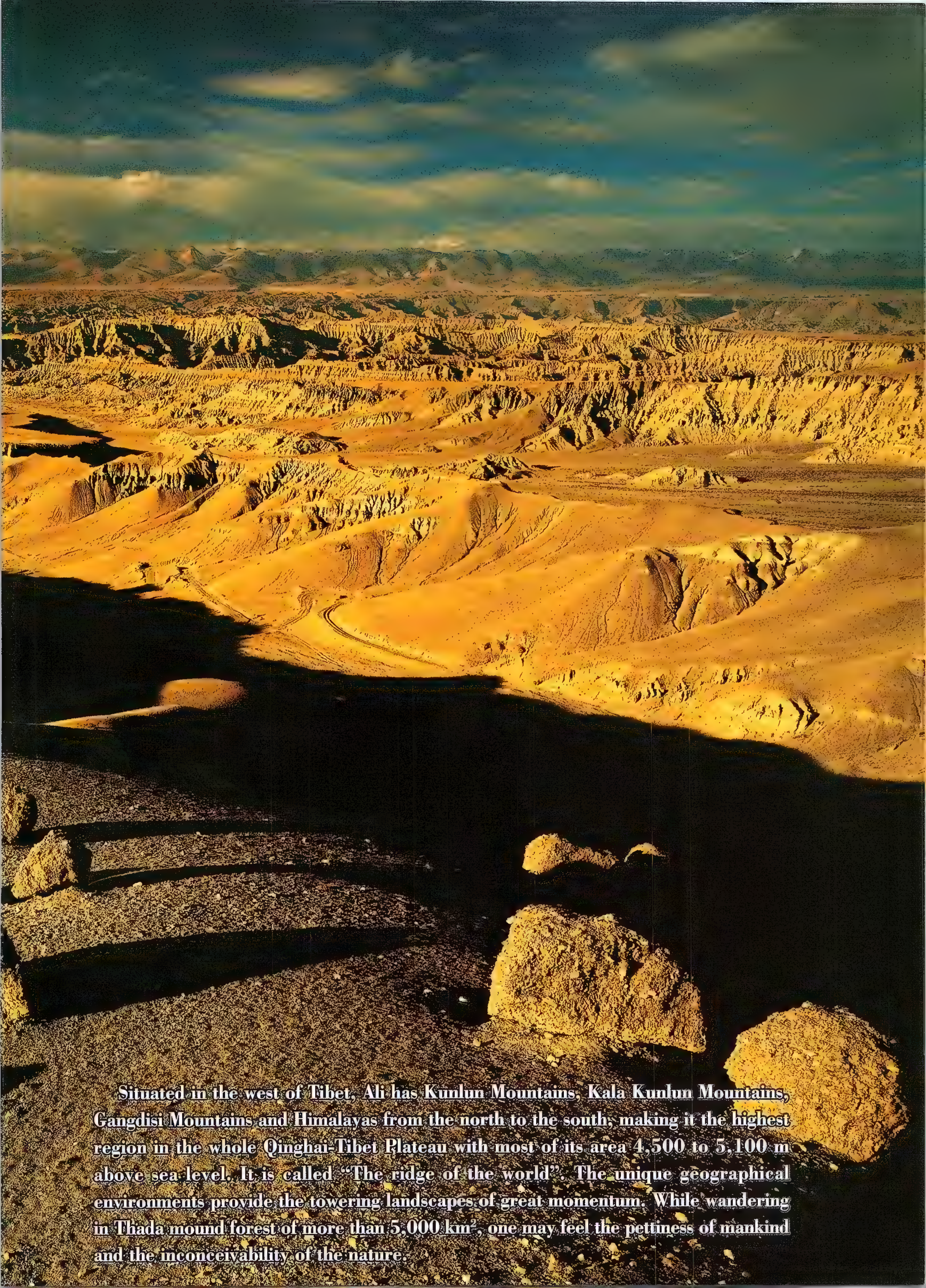
The Ridge of the World



The orogeny of Himalayas raised the lakebed and resulted in the unique mound forest. (by Sun Chengyi)



Situated in the west of Tibet, Ali has Kunlun Mountains, Kala Kunlun Mountains, Gangdisi Mountains and Himalayas from the north to the south, making it the highest region in the whole Qinghai-Tibet Plateau with most of its area 4,500 to 5,100 m above sea level. It is called “The ridge of the world”. The unique geographical environments provide the towering landscapes of great momentum. While wandering in Thada mound forest of more than 5,000 km^2, one may feel the pettiness of mankind and the inconceivability of the nature.

Yearning for Guge

One ancient story about Guge Kingdom aroused my enthusiasm in travelling in Ali in winter. The reason I reconciled to set out for the long and tough journey was that I wanted to ponder on the moving story on laying down one's life for a just cause.

From Lhasa to Ali

Before setting out, I had worried about the traffic conditions in Ali in such a winter. I certainly could not bear the expensive car chartering fees alone. So I could only get ready to hitch hike.

Transport: When I arrived, I got a line on that the long-distance bus run by Tibetan Antelope Travel and Transportation Co., Ltd had just jointly been operated with the state. The company had been providing service all the year around. The bus set out each three or four days for three days' drive with fare between ¥400 to 700. That was really a good word.

At the ticket office of Lhasa North Bus Station, I met the manager of the company. He was from Shenzhen. When he heard that I could speak Cantonese too, he was being extra kind to me. The bus started the journey in the evening, but I was the only passenger on the bus. The three drivers told me, "Choose a berth as you like. You may use more than 30 bed quilts on the bus, but take care not to catch a cold."

Landscape: The bus drove along the northern route, which had a distance of 1,760 km. It was quite different from the southern route as its altitude is relatively high. We drove in deserts and grasslands. Besides the relatively simple and monotonic, I could only saw wild ass, wolf and Tiben antelope every once in a while.

The milk of human kindness: The warm human kindness

superseded the simplicity of sceneries. During the journey, the three drivers were very concerned for me. Every time I went together with them to Tibetan restaurant or tent for dinning, they vied with each other for payment. They gave me the best protection.

Highway condition: The bus began to pick up Tibetan passengers after Rika. The bus was heaped with cargos in varied sizes. I moved from the three-berth in the middle to the one-berth in the front. I found that the highway to Ali had not any landslide, subsidence or obstruct of rivers in xeric winter. The bus drove unimpeded after the slow driving due to iced river course for a while.

The culmination point of the north route was a highway pass between the 22nd maintenance squad and Cuoqin more than five kilometres above the sea level. It was late at night when the bus passed there. I still did not fall asleep and was enjoying the glittering stars above. A driver took thought for my reaction to high altitudes. I said I had not. He then smiled at ease.

A Hub of Communication

In the forth morning, we finally arrived at the location of the administrative office of Ali Prefecture. It had an altitude as high as 4,300 m and a temperature lower than Lhasa. For tourists, Shiquan Town was both endearing and hateful. Although there was no sight spot worth seeing here, it was a hub of communication. It was located at the intersection of Xinjiang - Tibet Highway and Heihe River - Ali. It leaded to Xinjiang and countries in Central Asia in the north, Shenshan, Shenghu, Nepal and India in the south, Naqu and Lhasa in the east and the ruins of Guge Kingdom in the west.

The town was self-contained with a number of hotels, restaurants, shops, public bathrooms and even ballrooms and bowling clubs. Though Ali was the region with lowest population density (0.23/km^2) in China, it was one of the regions with the highest per capita income in Tibet. Taking Shiquan Town as an example, its accommodation fee doubled other Tibetan regions! It cost ¥30 a night and ¥10 to use the public bathroom. I met several Japanese tourists at a bank, and they complained that they had not expected that the consumption was so expensive here.

From Shiquan Town to Thada

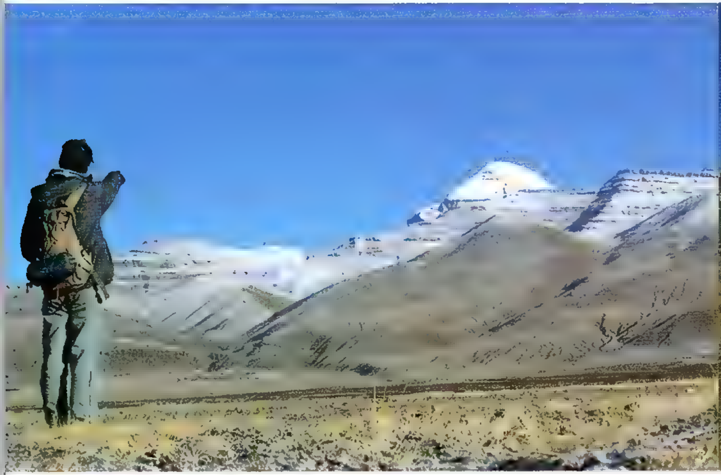
On the first day in Shiquan Town, I got to know Ms. Yan, who was an accountant of the travel and transportation company. When she found out that I was travelling alone, she worried about my safety and then made her room for me. Her kindness added colours for Shiquan Town with plain sceneries.

Transport: When I woke up, I set off for Thada. Before that I had known that the bus (¥150) to Thada had left a moment ago (only one bus is available on each Saturday). I came to postal car station under the instruction of Tourist Guide. The clerk at the station told me that the postal car set out at 7:00 a.m. each Thursday and Saturday (must register one day in advance and charge ¥150). I missed again. But I did not want to waste time. So I took all my baggage and went to the biggest gas station in the south of the town to take my chance and wait for pick-up.

The milk of human kindness: Though it was already nearly 9:00 a.m. (daybreak). The highway was deathly still. The person in charge of the gas station asked me in surprise, "Why did you go to Ali for travel in winter? I haven't seen any automobile to Thada in recent days. It's out of the way. It's too cold. Please come in and have a seat."

The elder brother was from Henan Province and had managed the gas station in Tibet for many years. He said that doing business was not competitive in Tibet and the honest Tibetans would not cause him any trouble. The household invited me for breakfast and said, "If you cannot be picked up, you are welcome to stay in our staff's dorm."

1. **The towering Guge old town in sand (by Yang Yankang)**
2. **Driving in the mound forest was just like entering into Hollywood.**
3. **Kiuchi successfully travelled through Shenshan, Gangren and Boqi in early December. (by Kiuchi)**
4. **Thada County Tuolin Town was surrounded by the magic mound forests.**



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It was almost noon. I heard a vehicle coming near. I rushed out and thumbed a ride. It was a jeep with empty seats returning to Thada county seat. "What's the fare for Thada?" "¥200." They did not want to cut it down on all accounts. I finally realised how expensive the fare was.

In the jeep I saw another passenger. He was a Japanese undergraduate named Kiuchi. Since he loved travelling, he took a year off school to come to China, Nepal and India. He set off for Ali from Yecheng. He had travelled throughout Shenshan in the first ten days of December and was now going to Thada. It had taken five days for him to wait for this jeep. When he knew that I intended to go to Shenshan, he reminded me in self-taught Putonghua, "It was very cold in Shenshan now. The perpetual snow at peak was even deeper than your knees. You must not go there alone!"

Landscape: We smoothly surmounted Ayila Mountain pass and entered into a forest world. The topographical feature of mound forest was also called "rock sheet landform", which was a kind of special landform formed by means of fluvial erosion. It featured deep ravines and steep slopes, just like grand and upright castles as well as holy and stately sanctuaries. Kiuchi and I could not help clamouring. Even though I had seen numerous splendid photos of mound forest, it was not a patch on the one tenth of coming here in person! To my surprise, Thada mound forest was as wide as 5,600 km^2. There were so many beautiful sceneries on the way that I could not take them in with my eyes.

Highway condition: When the jeep drove into the labyrinthine natural earth ditches, Kiuchi and I shouted with one accord, "Hollywood!" The sceneries before our eyes were

1. The spectacular sundown of Xiangquan River in Thada
2. Tuolin Temple was where Master Atisha did missionary work.
3. The main hall of Tuolin Temple features Kashmirian colour.

The Mystifying Guge Kingdom

The Beginning of Guge Kingdom

In the 9th century, the strong Tubo Dynasty was on the wane. Langdama — the last king of Tubo, carried out a policy destroying josses and exterminating Buddhist doctrines. In this way, Tubo got into hot water and the society became turbulent. Later the king was assassinated. The two queens of the king vied for the succession of the kingship. At last, the miserable prince Jidenima escaped to Ali. At this point, the curtain rose on the history of Guge Kingdom.

At that time, the ever strong Xiangxiong Kingdom had already declined. The king of Xiangxiong accepted Jidenima into his service and married his daughter to him as he admired the noble royal Tubo blood. Later the king had Jidenima succeeded to the throne. From then on, Xiangxiong Kingdom and Tubo Kingdom were related by blood.

Taking Buddhism as the Foundation of the Country

Jidenima had three sons. In his late years, he invested his sons with fiefs. The eldest son possessed Mangyu (was located to the south of Kashmir and later was developed into Ladake Kingdom). The second son held Burang (in Pulan County, Ali) and the third son, Dezu, had Xiangxiong (Guge Kingdom). The youngest son thus became the founder of Guge Kingdom.

Since there was a deep yearning for Buddhism in Tubo at that time, Guge Kingdom took Buddhism. Dezu had two sons. The elder son Keri had a strong passion for Buddhism. He even demised the kingship to his brother and became a monk named Yixiwo.

At that time, most Tibetan monks slacked off in disciplines, hit the bottle and ran wild. As a result, Yixiwo once sent 21 Guge youths to Jiashimiluo (i.e. today's Kashmir) to study and translate doctrines in order to revive the Buddhist doctrines. Due to the sweltering climate there and prevailing plague, only two youths came back alive. One of them was Rinchen Sangpo. Yixiwo built the Tuolin Temple as a location for translators to translate sutras. Rinchen Sangpo had studied in India and brought back a large number of sutras and dignitaries, making outstanding distributions for revival of Buddhism. In Tibetan Buddhism history, the Tantra Esoteric Buddhism doctrines translated under the presidency of Master Lianhuasheng in the 8th century were called Old Mizhou while those translated under the presidency of Rinchen Sangpo were called New Mizhou.

Yixiwo's Martyr

At the same time, Yixiwo heard that the dignitary Atisha in the neighboring country India were of great skill and determined to invite him to deliver a sermon in Guge. But the invitation of dignitary would spend a lot of gold. The old Yixiwo was captured when he went to the border to raise gold. The enemies coerced him that he could survive only if he gave up Buddhism. He firmly refused them. Later the enemies asked him to redeem himself with gold equivalent to his weight. He still persisted in his ideal and hence they scorched his head with fire. When the news was spread to Guge, the whole country was astonished. The entire country was of one mind of raising gold and saving him. When the country had raised enough gold, the white-headed Yixiwo firmly declared, "My head had been damaged and now I was like a beast. It's no use to save me. Please sended the ransom gold to India and invited Master Atisha to carry forward Buddhist doctrines in Ali and Guge." At last, Yixiwo, who preferred doctrines to life, was killed. His body was brought back to Guge and buried in the tower.

Master Atisha, who had ever held the post of abbot at 18 temples and was nearly 60 years old, was moved by this spirit of selfless devotion. So he climbed over Himalayas and entered Guge Kingdom after numerous hardships.

Atisha Revived Buddhism

Atisha arrived in Ali in 1042 and started preaching and translating sutras with Tuolin Temple as his base, exerting a great impact on the systematisation of the Buddhist doctrines and commandments. Three years later, Atisha was invited to Weizang region to do missionary work for nine years. In 1054, Atisha passed away at Nietang Temple, Qushui County of Lhasa when he was 72 years old.

The eras of Yixiwo, Atisha and Rinchen Sangpo were the important periods for the development of Tuolin Temple. Guge had been gradually developed into the centre of the Buddhism culture in the west of Tibet. The artists and craftsmen from Kashmir, Ladake, India and Nepal gathered here to build temples, mould statues of Buddha and draw mural painting, adding colours for Tuolin Temple as well as Guge. It was the basis for the recollection of the later generations.

Firedrake Year Ali Doctrines Meeting held in 1076 intended to commemorate the death of Master Atisha. The meeting provided the hierarchs from Ali, Weizang, Anduo and Kangqu with the chances to exchange between Exoteric and Tantra Esoteric Buddhism. At the same time, a large number of temples of Buddism emerged in all regions in Tibet and had a key impact on the development of Buddhism in Tibetan areas. The doctrines brought by Atisha from Ali to Weizang were called Upper-route Doctrines. The early sutras of Lianhuasheng era unearthed by treasure diggers were called Down-route Doctrines.

The Decline of Guge Kingdom

Vigorously developed by the kings through the ages, Guge Kingdom reached its acme in the 16th century. In the late 16th century and early 17th century, the kingdom was on the wane. It finally was conquered by the neighbouring country Ladake and came to an end of its 700-year history. But how Guge people vanished with the kingdom remains a mystery to archaeologists today!

virtually the scenes in Hollywood movies. I had not imagined that the west of China was so smiliar to America. The driver said, "In one summer a flood rushed down and submerged the driving vehicles, killing quite a number of people." Contrary to general opinion, it was much safer here in winter. At about 4:00 p.m., we safely arrived in Tuolin Town, the county seat of Thada County.

Thada County Seat

Located at the mesa of Xiangquan river valley as high as 3,760 m in absolute altitude, Tuolin Town had a warmer climate than Shiquan River Town. This was a small but self-contained town. Along the straight street there were hotels, restaurants, post office, bank, super market and Internet bars. Its commodity price was even higher than Shiquan Town! But the sceneries here were really spectacular. The famous Tuolin Temple was standing at the end of the street. Furthermore, I could enjoy the beauty of Xiangquan River and the sundown in mound forest in distance. I had a very good impression of it.

Before visiting Tuolin Temple, I first contacted the local cultural bureau and hoped that I could get permission to take some photos in the temple. The government departments here carried out a winter office-hour system which was envied by southerners: work at 10:30 a.m., made a meal and took a nap at noon, went to work at 4:30 p.m. again and came off work at about 7:00 p.m. According to their office hours, I went to the

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cultural bureau at 11:00 a.m. The person in charge had just been transferred from other province, and hence had a relatively conservative work style, particularly to writers. He said, “Once the historic sites were brought into the open, troubles would come in the train too. Antique stealing cases were steeply rising now!” I said to him, “The landscapes and ancient monuments in Thada were known by the world. Sooner or later, they would be listed in the ‘world natural and cultural heritages’. By then they would be protected by everyone. Self-seclusion was not necessary.”

2

Famous Temple in Guge

Tuoling Temple was also called Flying Temple. It was built in the 12th century and partially rebuilt in the 15th century. Keri (called Yixiwo after he became a Buddhist), the second king of Guge, built it in order to revive the Buddhist doctrine. It was used by Rinchen Sangpo (translation expert of the time) and his attendants for sutra translation. Later Yixiwo risked his life in inviting India Buddhism master Atisha to Tibet to do missionary work. Tuoling Temple thus became the seat for his creation and missionary work.

The temple consisted of three parts: main hall, bedrooms and tower forest.

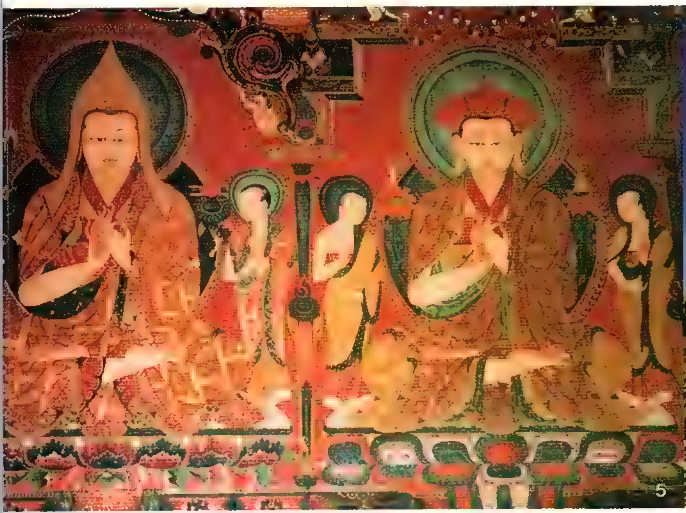
Red Hall: I entered into the rundown temple with the guide from the cultural bureau. We first visited Red Hall (or Dukang Hall). In the interest of protecting the remains in the hall, visitors could only use natural light or electric torch for lighting and were not allowed to take photos. The statues of Buddha in the hall were not intact due to the breakage with the years as well as the removal of heads or bodies by thieves.

Fortunately, there were still 36 intact wood columns in Red Hall. I gasped in admiration when I saw the fine and artistic mural paintings on the ceiling and the four walls. The mural paintings were rich in contents, including those reflecting the noblemen worshiping Buddha and Buddhist stories as well as the portraits of Rinchen Sangpo and Atisha.

White Hall: In White Hall there was many splendid mural paintings of Buddhist figures. The painting techniques and costumes in the portraits showed Nepalese and Kashmirian styles. I also saw the portrait of Tsong Khapa, the founder of the Gelugpa School, which was established later. It turned out that Tuoling Temple belonged to the Gedang School of Master Atisha at first. In the 15th century, it converted to the Gelugpa School of Tsong Khapa. But the painting manners and techniques were quite similar in that period, and were called Guge Painting Techniques.

Jiasa Hall: The main hall of Tuolin Temple was Jiasa Hall, which was rebuilt in 1997 - 1999 and now served as an antique exhibition room. Stepping into the hall, I could only see some scattered antiques not very worthy of seeing. But when I stepped over the backdoor, I found it was quite different. As literatures

1. The view from the monk lodging cave around Old Tuolin Temple
2. Devoted Tibetan woman circulated around a pagoda for worship.
3. The ruined monk lodging house of Tuolin Temple
4. Ali’s xeric winter landscape
5. Legible mural paintings of Tsong Khapa and translator Rinchen Sangpo were found in Tuolin Temple.
6. The 108 withered pagodas near Tuolin Temple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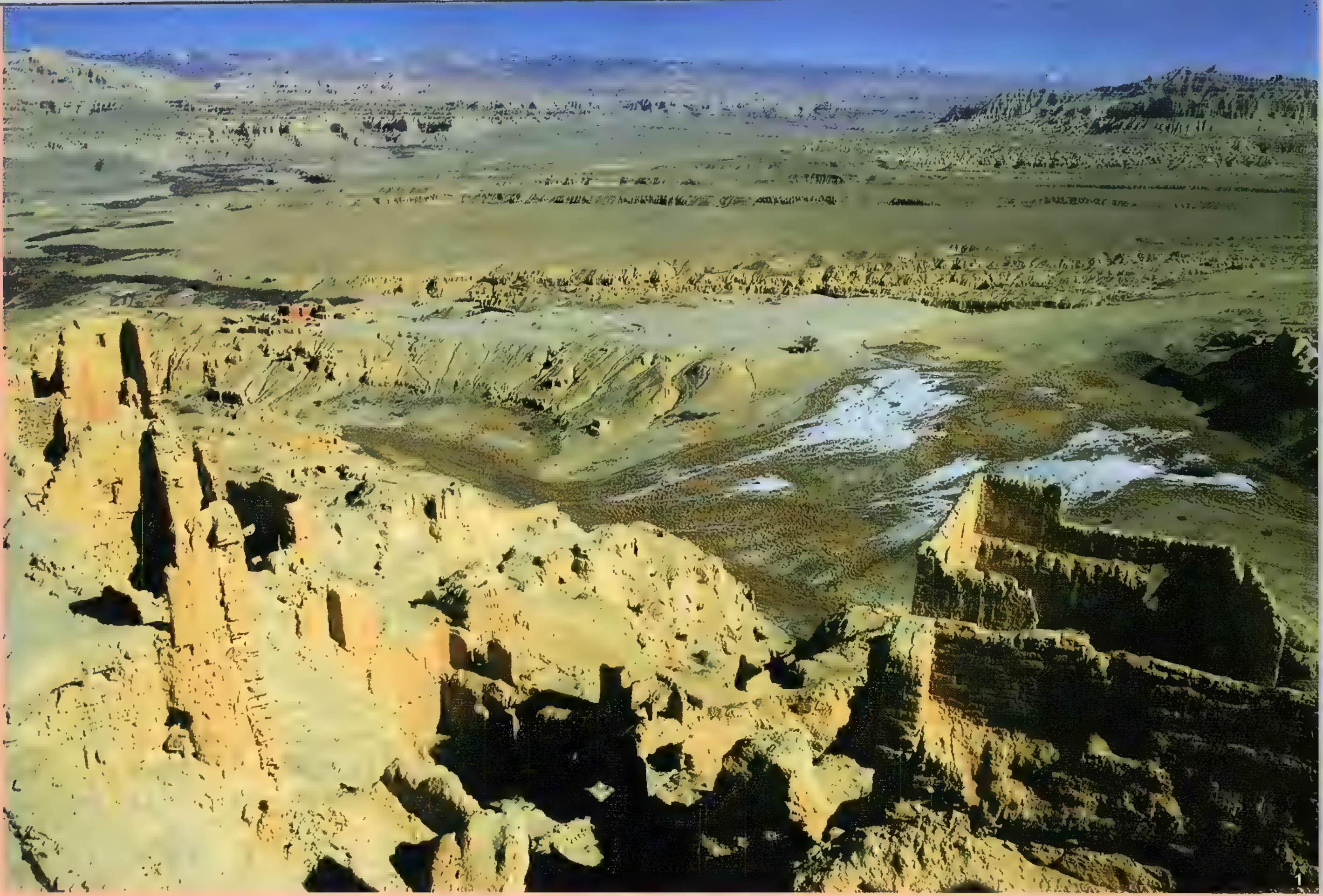
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indicate, the hall was built by following the layout of Sangye Temple, a major Buddhist temple at the time of Tubo. The entire architecture symbolised the Altar Town of Tantra Esoteric Buddhism. Its centre was Xumi Mountain. The four smaller halls in the four orientations stood by the four major parts of Buddhism. The high-rise towers at the four corners represented Devarajas protecting Buddhist doctrine.

We looked around the main hall. Its periphery consisted of four halls and 14 smaller halls. These smaller halls were locked in order to protect the antiques in them. I could not see the statues of Buddha, Bodhisattva, Dumu and Arhats inside, but I enjoyed them on the album published by the cultural bureau. But the visit of this holy altar town like a labyrinth was an uncommon experience.

Master Rinchen Sangpo Hall: There stood a small building to the southwest of Jiasa Hall. It was said it had been the lodging house for Rinchen Sangpo, which had three floors in the past, but now had only one floor. The dwelling houses for the master and Atisha were not identifiable anymore for the long time passed.

Ancient towers: After visiting the halls, it was almost 1:00 p.m. The guide from the cultural bureau went back for meal and siesta. I went to the ancient towers near the temple. The row of weathered pagodas several hundred metres long had witnessed the past

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splendid history of Guge.

Visiting Old Tuolin Temple

It seems that antiques and treasures were everywhere in the vast land of Thada. When I looked up from the ancient tower forest, I saw an architectural complex similar to the temple, rock cave and pagoda nearby. The natives said that it was probably the site of Old Tuolin Temple. Two hours later, I climbed up the site and saw that the rundown temples and incomplete statues of Buddha were built with gravel soil. The mount was studded with natural caves that used as bedrooms for monks. I could not help admiring the wisdom of the previous generations.

From Thada to Guge

Just like Kiuchi, lots of tourists went to Thada to visit Guge ruins rather than Tuolin Temple. On the day I visited Tuolin Temple, Kiuchi had walked 18 km (about 6 - 7 hours) to Guge ruins alone. He had said that he would return the same day (because there was no hotel there). But I did not see his return at that night. I worried about him and requested the cultural bureau to ask about him. They called the scenic spot and learned that it was almost nightfall when Kiuchi got to Guge. He requested the administrative office to take him in, for fear of any dangers. Kiuchi had made a wise decision.

The owner of a Cantonese food restaurant in the town once told me, "In the last October, a solitary female Japanese tourist went alone to Guge ruins on foot in the morning. She insisted in returning on the same day and passed through the desolate land alone. She got lost underway and spent a long time heading back to town. When she fished for the restaurant before dawn, she said nothing and kept crying on ground. Such a venturesome tour is not worthy!"

Transport: Although Guge site was a famous scenic spot in Ali; there was no bus to go there. If it were not for tourist bus, one could only hitch hike. But no one would charter a bus to go there in winter. So you must go there on foot if you really want to go.

I set out at noon one day later than Kiuchi. After I had walked for about one hour, I met a freight car to Zhaburang (two kilometres from the site).

40 minutes later, the driver asked me to get off at a point at the foot of Guge site (I had to spend another half an hour on climbing up the mountain on foot). Before saying good-bye, we had appointed that he would pick up me at 4:00 p.m. But later he broke the appointment.

Guge Ruins

I looked up to the old town in an area of 720,000 m^2. It distributed over the hillside of 300 m long.

Before setting out, I did not know if the remote Guge site would close in winter. Unexpectedly, it remained opened all the year round because there were town keepers staying there.

The town keeper and guide were surprised to see me. He said that there were about 2,000 tourists coming to visit the site each year, but almost no one would come after October. He also

1. Overlooking the site of Guge old town from the Summer Palace at mountaintop
2. Traces of Buddha engravings were found in the site of Old Tuolin Temple.
3. A monk lodging located on mountainside
4. The relics of Guge Kingdom opened to the outside world almost all year round. The tickets for both local and foreign tourists were of the same price ¥105.
5. The living modes of the noblemen and people in those years were reflected in Guge mural paintings. (by Dong Fengan)

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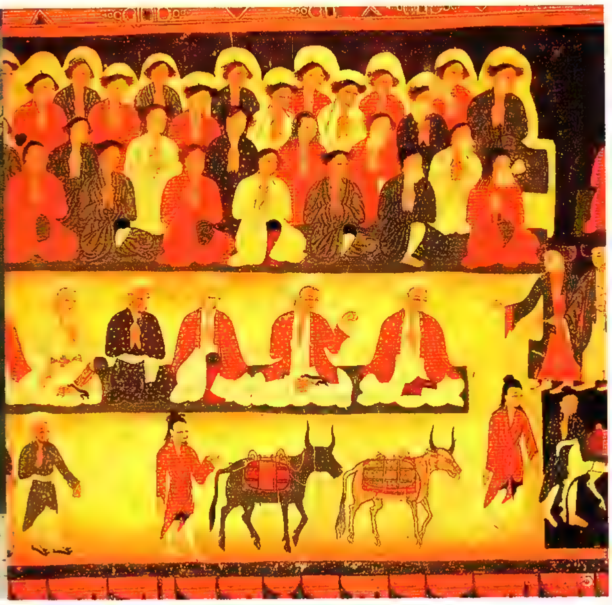

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said that I maybe the last tourist this year. He took out his keys and opened the gate to Guge old town. Then he showed me around the four halls that had been kept intact.

Dumu Hall: Built in the 14th century, Dumu Hall stood at the foot of the mountain. It was the latest built Buddha Hall among the architectures of the old town. Only incomplete images were left on the mural paintings in the hall.

White Hall: White Hall was named due to the white external walls. It was also called Lakanggabo. This was the oldest and biggest as well as the most intact building in Guge old town. There were 36 wood columns transported from the other places in the country. The columns were finely carved with decorations and coloured patterns. The statue of Maitreya Buddha for offering in the past had been damaged in the cultural evolution. Fortunately, the mural paintings here had been well reserved. The flamboyant colours were studded with brilliant golden varnish.

Red Hall: Red Hall was also called Lakangmabo. The entrance doors, doorframes and door heads feature sumptuous embossing. Some residual statues of Buddha and pagodas remained in the temple. The mural paintings showed the rituals, ceremonial dancing, trading and transportation of Guge Kingdom and were the lively records beyond historical materials.

Daweide Hall: It was above the Red Hall. The subject matter of the mural paints was a large-scale painting of King Kong as well as the rare picture indicating that Atisha was delivering a sermon.

After looking around the four halls, the guide left and I continued to climb the mountain and sightsee. I slowly walked up along the sparse stone steps and finally came to an entrance to a postern after passing by the monk lodging area and safeguarding area. I passed through the secret passage to the top of the old town. There standed ruined Summer Palace and locked Alter Town Palace. While overlooking the site from the window of Summer Palace, I pondered how such a puissant dynasty could vanish completely. It was an enigma for archaeologists.

Returning to Thada from Guge

After visiting the site, I went back to the entrance on time to wait for the appointed driver. Yet he did not appear. I was going to rent a room at the town keeper's, but he advised me to ask for

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help in Zhaburang Village nearby.

Path conditions: The keeper pointed ahead to an open space without any signs of human habitation and said, "Followed the footprints and you would get to the village in 15 minutes." I set off in that direction and entered into an ancient tower forest after five minutes. It turned out that I mistook the ruts as footprints. I wasted more than ten minutes.

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I returned to the starting point and identified the difference between the rut and footprint. The former was broader and was in pairs, normally appearing on flat and wide road surface. The latter was a single and narrow line and focused on roughness or shortcut. With the perception, I immediately found a slim footprint. Since the village was beyond my vision, I kept walking and took with a pinch of salt.

I entered into the valley bottom after about half an hour. The visual field ahead became narrower and the path had more turns. I felt that I was abandoned by the world and a little scared. In addition, I needed to cross over a dangerous glacier. My confidence began shrinking. Ten minutes later, I wanted to return. A Tibetan appeared ahead and told me the village was behind another turn.

Finally, I saw colourful flags fluttering in the wind at the end of the valley bottom. It was a Tibetan village with tens of households. A woman looked surprised but excited to see me. Then I gesticulated to ask her to take me in. She understood soon and nodded. She and her husband lived in a small adobe in an area equivalent to living room of a common household. There was a stove at the centre and seats for guest and bed on both sides. The house was equipped with a TV and a video tape recorder. It seemed that they were herdsmen of grassland. This household lived a relatively comfortable life.

Despite the language barrier, the couple treated me kindly and prepared beef noodle for me. They did not set hearts at rest until I had two big bowls. Then they played a police-brigand movie with Chinese dialogue for me. At about 10:00 p.m., I was sleepy and hinted them I wanted to rest. They borrowed several new and warm blankets from neighbour and made up a comfortable "bed" for me. I was moved to tears by their generosity.

After I had my sleep, I was sated with two bowls of noodle before leaving. On the point of leaving, I left all my solid food and gave a pendant of Rinchen Sangpo to the host. He took it as a sacred cow and carefully hung it on himself.

Landscape: Even though it was in winter, I felt like outing in autumn when I was roaming about in the mound forest. The 5-hour solitary travel was not hard and adventurous as I had imagined. I walked along the desultory ruts in one direction and did not see any creatures under way (except crows). But I never panic or felt lonely thanks to the magnificent sceneries all around.

1. **The desolate ruined of Guge Kingdom, which had a glorious history of 700 years. (by Wu Guoen)**
2. **Six-character incantation on the gate to Guge Red Hall**
3. **The secret passage to the summer palace at the mountaintop**
4. **The Altar Town Palace at the mountaintop rich in Kashmirian colours**
5. **The writer looked for Zhaburang Village by tracing other's footprints.**

5

Crested ibis, known as the "Asian Red Ruby", was once widely inhabited in East Asia. In 1960s, it was endangered as a result of environmental deterioration and was listed as one of the protected birds in the world. However, it has been spotted in Yangxian County of Shaanxi Province in recent years. For several years, in the wild forest of Qinling Mountain, our photographer has tracked the mating and feeding of crested ibis, and he recorded some precious moments with cameras.

Keeping Watch Crested Ibis

Photos by Jiao Jingquan Article by Ding Changqing

Crested ibis, one of the most endangered birds in the world, only has one wild habitat, distributing in Yangxian County and surrounding areas in Shaanxi Province. Since the re-discovery of wild crested ibis in China in 1981, research, protection and propaganda have attracted attention of domestic and foreign experts, scholars and environmental organisations. During the past 20 years, China has gained outstanding achievements in protecting crested ibis, and the number of wild crested ibis has increased from seven to over 240, and the breeding amount 260. China has also helped Japan to breed about 50 crested ibises.

National Treasure Class Endangered Animal

Being classified as endangered animal, like panda, crested ibis earns special recognition. I planned to embark on a research on crested ibis in 1997. Yet, this research had not been started until 1999, since the living and breeding information of crested ibis were listed as confidential.

In the spring of 2000, Jiao Jingquan, a photographer, went to Yangxian County for photographing crested ibis. Since his activities were restricted, capturing the beauty of crested ibis took a long time.

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1. **Parent feeding the new-born crested ibis**
2. **Baby crested ibis fighting for food**
3. **During the past 20 years, the number of wild crested ibis has increased from seven to over 240**

In the past several years, overcoming many hardship and restriction, Jiao has visited Yangxian County numerous times, and has completed a research on the life of crested ibis in the past 20 years. Domestic and international awareness has put the bird in a favourable position. Yet, there is still a long way for us to protect them.

First, crested ibis only has one isolated wild habitat, and has limited ability to bear and resist sudden

Crested Ibis

Crested ibis is called Nipponis Nippon Temminck, and is once widely distributed in East-Asia. In the 1920s and 1930s, they lived in Heilongjiang, Gansu, Anhui and Zhejiang. In 1960s, they were endangered as a result of environmental deterioration and were listed as one of the protected birds in the world. It was not until 1981 that they had been re-discovered in Yangxian County in Shaanxi Province. Regulations were then passed for protection.

A grown-up crested ibis weights 1,400-1,890 g, and is 670-791 mm in length. The bird is of red top, yellow face and a black long mouth. Their ideal habitats are water-field, swamps, ponds and streams. Crabs, frogs and fish are what they eat. The geographyical location of Yangxian County is ideal for crested ibis, since the land is wet, flat and surrounded by hills.

The mating season for crested ibis is April that they are busy with building nest. Two to Four eggs are laid every time, and it takes about a month for the baby bird to born.

accidents (such as change of climate, environment pollution and murrain etc.). Once disaster occurs, it may cause destructive strike to them. Therefore, it is necessary to "re-introduce" crested ibis, such as releasing the breeding crested ibis in different places and setting up the second and third wild populations. However, this is an enormous and systematic project requiring coordination between different administrative departments. It involves a complete research of the birds' migration history and living environment. A site for breeding should be selected. Other issues, such as wild training, disease prevention, legislation, protecting and managing, should also be considered. "Re-introduction" is the best method for protecting endangered species and has numerous successful examples in the world. Currently, this project has drawn the attention of the government, but lots of problems need to be solved before putting it into practice, like when should the project start, and most importantly — how long could crested ibis wait?

Rethinking Protection

When we went deep into our research, we realised the complicity of this project but were also inspired by new ideas. I was engaged in the question "how long could the current protective measures maintain" over the past one year. With the increasing number of crested ibis, the job is getting more difficult compared to 20 years ago. At that time, there were extremely few wild crested ibis, and they lived in an enclosed area. The jobs involved were only safeguarding the mating area and stopping the use of pesticide and chemical fertiliser in the places that they were looking for foods. Currently, there were

1,000 families with 240 wild crested ibises and nearly 40 breeders. It is difficult to protect them with the old method.

In order to essure sustainable development of crested ibis protection, the benefits of local farmers should be considered. If they receive benefits for protecting the birds, they will be more actively engaged in this activity. I presented several plans, for example, developing "crested ibis brand" green rice, adjusting the planting structure, leaving the paddy field to crested ibis, planting herbs and other economic crops in dry land and developing ecological tourism. Yet, the project is so huge that it is out of my ability to handle it.

1. **Crested ibis resting on a tree**
2. **To keep the energy, they hardly move.**
3. **Crested ibis would fly away easily if they are disturbed. Photographers must hide themselves carefully.**

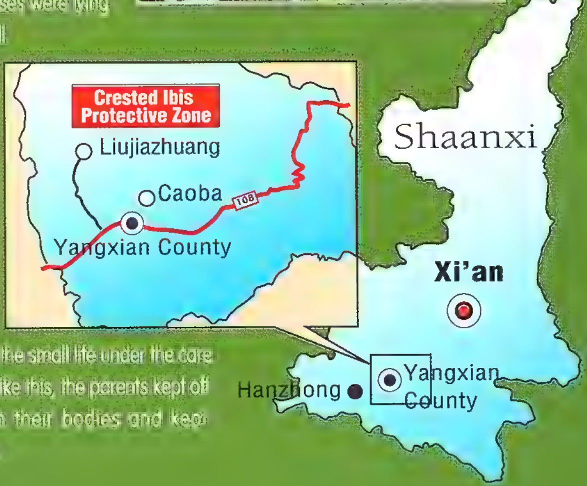
My First Sighting of Crested Ibis

Article by Jiao Jingquan

To this pine forest, I was the unexpected visitor to the nest 30 m away. I was a stranger. I was carefully and stilly standing on the small land, and tensely watching with my Cannon 600mm lens.

In the silent pine forest, when seeing wild crested ibis for the first time, I realised that freedom was so lovely. The crested ibises were lying in the nest, almost still.

About one hour later, one of them stood up and turned the eggs, to ensure even temperature. I could not see the eggs from the lens, but I could feel the happiness of the small life under the care of their parents. Just like this, the parents kept off wind and rain with their bodies and kept watching for 28 days.



The Azure Coast of Shenzhen

Photos by Zhou Wei Article by Shi [illegible]

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Shenzhen has a long and broad coastal line. But after a rapid development for 25 years the coast, it has been affected by the urbanisation and its ecological environment is deteriorating. In order to preserve this green sea, the writer and his friends used their cameras to record the changes along the Shenzhen coast and compiled a photo album to raise awareness of coastal protection.

The winter sun shines through the clear sky and warmly shines onto the broad tidal flats of the marsh at Shenzhen Bay. Deep inside the quiet mangrove, the tidal flat fish broke up the flat sunset light one the seashore with their tails but only to attract a group of Xenus cinereus to peck and hunt them. A group of dozens of black-faced spoonbill swirled down from the sky and waved their grand lute-shape long beak elegantly. These rare birds, with a total number of only 1,200 in the whole world, were on their long

1. Bordering area between Hong Kong and Shenzhen in the east—the lower district is Shatoujiao, Minsk Aircraft Carrier and Yantian District.
2. Nan'ao sea
3. Dapeng Bay awaiting the typhoon

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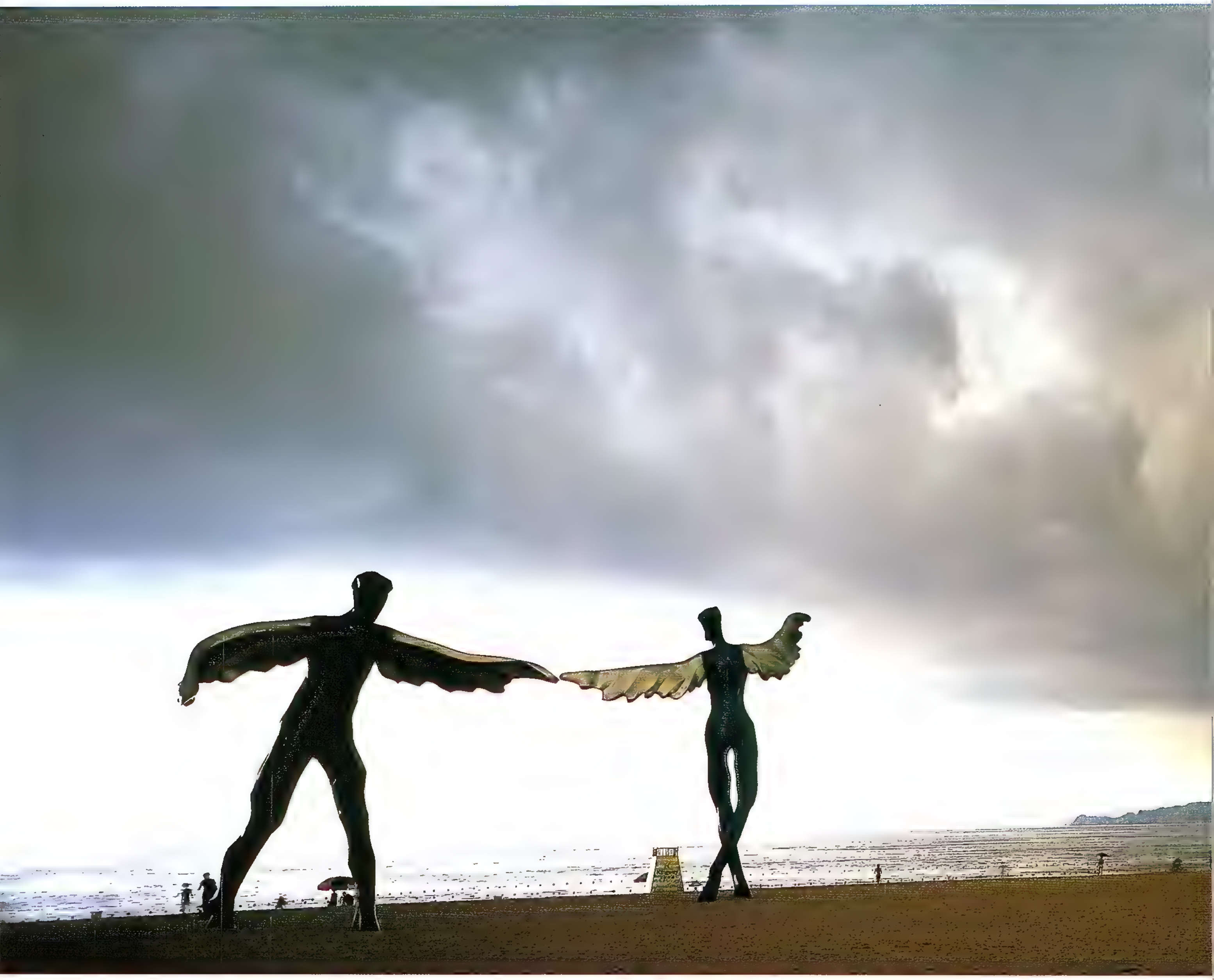


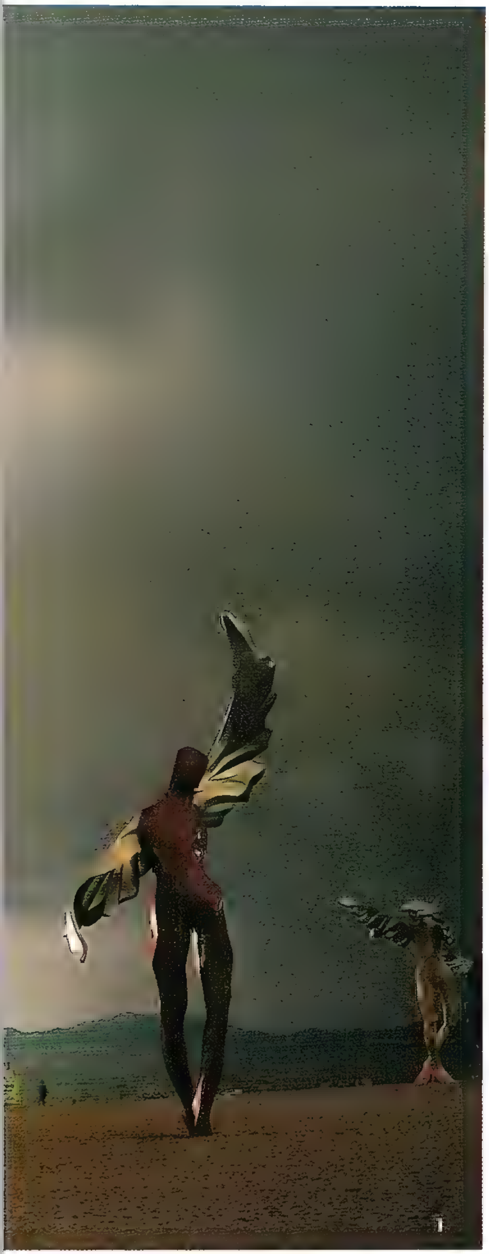
journey of migrating from Siberia to Australia. This marsh is an important relay station on the way where the migratory birds on the eastern hemisphere migrate.

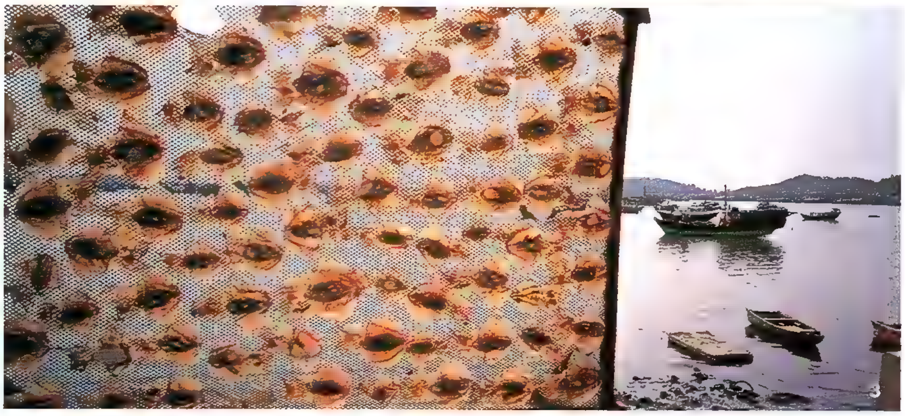
Shenzhen is endowed with a long coastal line that starts from the Dapeng Bay and Daya Bay in the east and ends at the Pearl River Mouth and Lingding Ocean, with a total length of 223.89 km. The Shenzhen coast is a part of the South Sea Coast in China's territory. Setting off from any point of the city, the tidal coast and the colourful and joyful beach life is within one hours' drive.

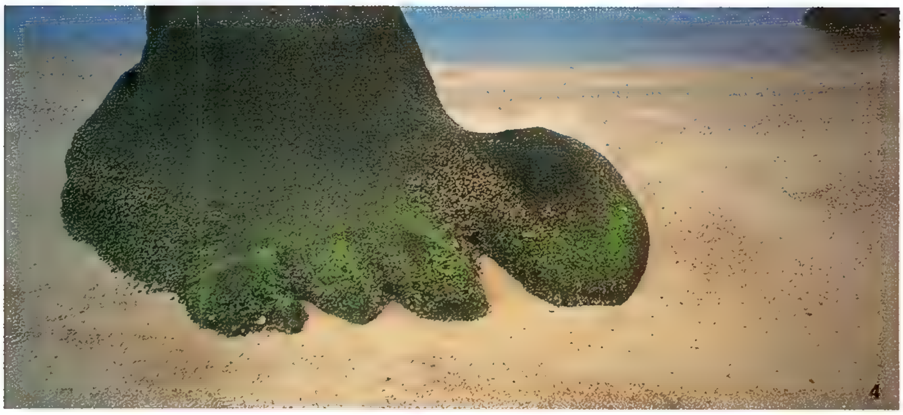
The sea is part of life here. Haicai Jiao is the eastern end of Shenzhen. It welcomes the first sunshine on behalf of Shenzhen and has in recent years become an ideal place for leisure for the youngsters in Shenzhen, where the camping clamour lasts to daybreak.

Jie Diaosha and Sha Yuchong are the rodsters' favourite places. The rodsters often come in groups of three to five with full equipment. They fish either near the coast or in the sea from a boat. They can sit for several hours like a statue and will never return home empty-handed. Yang Meikeng gathers people who want to get ashore onto the islands nearby. Dajia Island, Da Sanmen Island and Xiao Sanmen Island's always attract large groups of tourist on holidays. The island culture is special.

The casuarinas equisetifolia is so flourished that it looks like untidy hair of a human being. A small well dug in the Ming Dynasty is covered by green lichen. The old and small Matzu (or Mazu) temple is frequently visited with much incense sticks burning inside. The locally made fried blue crab is so delicious that people bring some with







them in boxes when they leave. The wild big eye snails are also delicious and welcomed by kids.

The beaches of the islands are paradises for divers. The frogmen are dressed in professional gear and shoot some photos in the underwater world. It is such a great enjoyment to dance with float grass and corals. Shenzhen Paraglider Club has more and more members. Watching the brave people who are operating the glider in the sky near the rocks and cliffs by the sea feels like watching the eagles. There are eight boys who play wind sails. The colourful sails dotted the sea with rare bright colours. This small team has been anticipating girls to join. Rubber dinghy lovers "occupy" the wild islands in Shenzhen Coast Area in different periods and batches. They seem to be the most silent group, who seldom mention their difficult and boring island life to outsiders. On the contrary, the training camps organise rock climbing one after one. The sound of whistle and shouting of the trainers scares the sea birds to fleet.

Behind the various colourful beach romance, the designing plan of the 15 km long ecological corridor of the Shenzhen Bay seashore leisure stripe has been initially decided. According to this plan, "ecology" and "life" will be combined closely in this 15 km long seashore corridor. While it connects the cross-sea bridge linking the western

1. **The rapidly changing weather brings along the magic view at Da Meisha free public bath.**
2. **"Tiger Skin Jellyfish" in Shenzhen sea area**
3. **A lot of sea products are sold in the Nan'ao beach street.**
4. **A strange-looking reef in Daya Bay island**

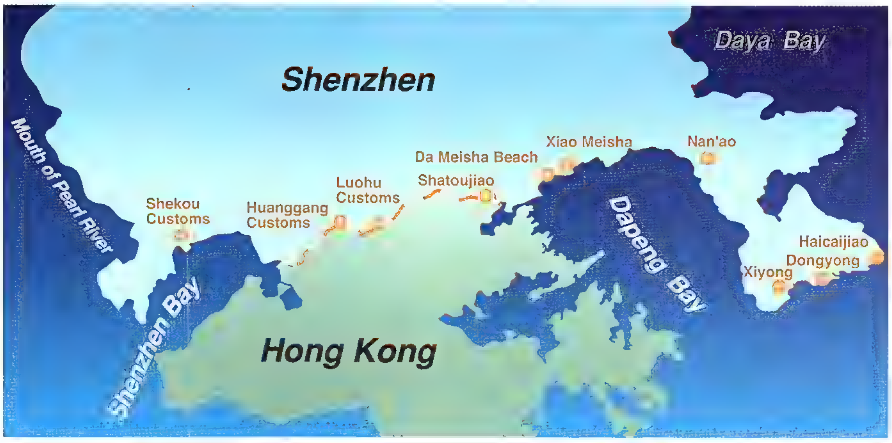
passage of Hong Kong and Shenzhen, it will create a leisure place for the residents to enjoy the sea. This project is expected to be completed at the end of 2010. By that time, it will be a destiny that the urban life of Shenzhen will be more and more close to the sea.

At the same time, the government is more concerned about the environmental protection along Shenzhen Sea Region and 134 oceanic functional areas including port shipping area, fishing resources utilisation and growing area, tourist area, sea water resource utilisation area and sea protection area. The total the area of the sea is 50,487 ha. Some sea protection actions have been implemented. The government begins to move the sea products culturing area to the eastern coast as planned. In April 2003 the artificial fish shelter project started. Tens of millions of dollars has been invested in building artificial fish shelters in Dapeng Bay and Daya Bay to make home for the live and multiplication of fish.

However, the 2004 Ocean Environment Quality Gazette from the State Ocean Bureau proved that the ocean environment quality in China is not so optimistic. The ocean water pollution in all the sea areas in China is impoverishing. Some kinds of shell in the in shore area have been polluted. Pollutant discharged from the ashore is worsening. Large area of poisonous red tides frequently take place. The deterioration has not been slowed down. Shenzhen has been hit by red tides for several times which killed numerous fish and shrimps. In summer 2004, experts of the WWF and the environmental protection volunteers conducted a coral reef survey in the eastern sea area and discovered that the coral coverage in this sea area had exceeded 50%. But artificial destruction, such as fishing by explosion and the sand and garbage produced by the development on shore, had seriously threatened the living of coral, which resulted in less than 20% of living coral.

There are numerous footprints at the beach. Some belong to the fiddler crabs and aigrettes; some belong to the yellow dogs and black cats in the village; and some belong to the fishermen and tourists. As said by the

photographer Zhou Wei, "It is a destiny that human beings will live with the sea. When we are watching the sea, the fish is looking at us, and the corals are stretching out their arms for us."

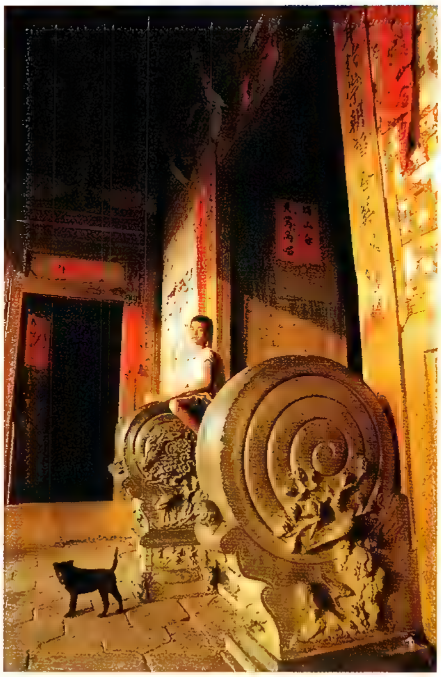

Shenzhen
Daya Bay
Mouth of Pearl River
Da Meisha Beach
Xiao Meisha
Nan'ao
Luohu Customs
Shatoujiao
Shekou Customs
Huanggang Customs
Dapeng Bay
Haicaijiao
Dongyong
Xiyong
Shenzhen Bay
Hong Kong

1. Shekou Power Plant. The water area of Pearl River Mouth near Shenzhen is the only natural reserve for Chinese white dolphin in China.
2. The last Shekou Bay Amoy oyster farm, which was later covered by the buildings newly built after landfill. Taken in 2001.
3. Construction site of the Shenzhen Bay Cross Sea Bridge in Shekou. The brigde will drastically shorten the customs clearance time between Hong Kong and Shenzhen.
4. Discarded oil drums at Nan'ao wharf. The sea is encountering pollution caused by oil leakage.

ZHANGPU – TOWN OF ROYAL REFUGE

Photos & article by Wang Min

Zhangpu is a small coastal county in Zhangzhou, southern Fujian. The hundred of old forts there were once the refuge for royal descendents.



1. A pair of exquisite stone drums in front of the gate of Xincheng.
2. Xincheng is a "Yard City" built in Qing Dynasty.
3. The old tower now becomes a tourist spot.
4. Yi'anbao is a well-preserved folk-built military fortress.

I went to Zhangzhou by train and then went to Huxi Town by bus. Huxi Town is a town bristling with western style buildings. I wandered around on the street, but did not find a restaurant. There was only one hostel in the town. I lay on the bed, listened to noises of vehicles and slept a sleepless night.

The Decayed Mansion

I got up very early to visit Three Cities in Five Li. Three cities refer to Zhaojiacheng (locally called Zhaojiabao), Yi'ancheng and Xincheng, which are famous for their distinctive architecture.

Xincheng was my first destination. People in southern Fujian have their own dialect. I met an old farmer and wanted to ask how to get to Xincheng. We were not able to have a verbal communication and could only write.

Facing the East China Sea, Xincheng was formerly the mansion of Lan Tingzhen, Commander of Fujian Naval Forces, and built in early Qing Dynasty. It was called "yard city", as there were small houses surrounded as circumvallation. The whole mansion was of quadrangle type and buildings were symmetrical. It was composed of entrance hall, the main hall, the rear hall, main tower and three groups of adjacent rooms. The 72 adjacent rooms surrounded and protected the mansion. Therefore it formed a structure of large quadrangle with a smaller one inside. However, this luxurious mansion was not well-protected and had changed into folk houses.

After visiting Xincheng, I went to Yi'ancheng (as known as Yi'anbao), which was established in 1688. The surrounding walls, 1,200 m long and 6.7 m high, were constructed with block stones with an inner wall of two metres high built with sticky rice, syrup and stones. This inner wall had 365 battlements. On the wall was a berme of 3.3 m wide and four gate towers. Close to the interior wall, there were stone ladders for stepping on the wall at every 50 m. Architectural features were still well-preserved. The 95 south-facing stone-built folk houses were built exquisitely, and eight flagstone-based streets were constructed in good order.

Home of Exiled Royal Descendants

Zhaojiabao is not different from other villages in the region. But villagers there are descendants of Zhao, the royal family of Song Dynasty. In 1279, when the Song Dynasty was invaded by Yuan army, the court retreated to Guangdong. A patriotic officer named Lu Xiufu drowned himself with the 9-year-old Emperor in the sea at Yashan. Zhao Ruohe (the Prince of Minchong), who fled with the Emperor to the south, wanted to recover southern Fujian by naval force. A storm struck his fleet when they sailed to the Fujian coast. In order to escape from the Yuan army, Zhao Ruohe changed his family name to Huang and settled down in Zhangpu. In Ming Dynasty, when they were involved in a lawsuit of intermarriage with another Huang family, they had to expose their family secret. The Court then allowed them to resume their family name "Zhao". A hundred years later, Zhao Fan (the tenth generation of Zhao Ruohe) passed the state examination and became the magistrate of Wuwei and later finance minister. In 1571, he returned home and began to build houses in Song style. His son Zhao Yi built the fort in 1620 under the architectural composition of the Song capital (today's Kaifeng, Henan Province). This became what we called Zhaojiabao today.

Zhaojiabao was completed in 20 years. The body of the city was called Wanbi Tower, which connoted patriotism and nationalism. The tower was 15 m high with three layers of quadrangles. There were bedrooms, a grain store and wells, as well as shooting holes on the walls. At a corner of the light court, a tunnel was privately dug to the outside of the city in the cover of wash port. The tower was surrounded by stone-based soil fort which was six metres high and over two metres wide with battlements. The city had four gates in four directions.

Wanbi Tower was also called Inner City. The Outer City was composed of five parallel five-line mansions, which were called "official hall". It was used to protect the Inner City. In front of the official hall, there was a square with stone mill and two pools in front of it. Over the pools was the Bianpai Bridge. Additionally, there were Bamboo Garden, Little Jiqing Yard, Buddha Gathering Pagoda, old wells, Martial Temple and a stage.

Zhaojiabao plays an indispensable role in understanding the architecture and urban lives of Kaifeng in Song Dynasty.

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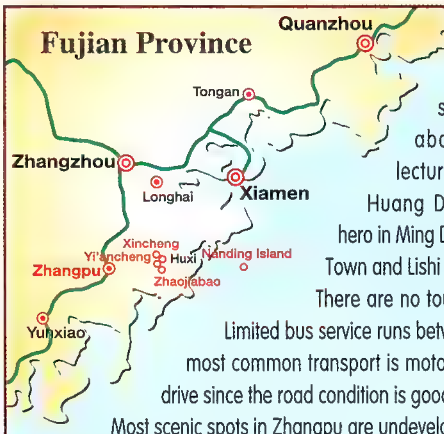
Travel Tips



In addition to scenic spots introduced above, there are the lecturing place visited by Huang Daozhou (a national hero in Ming Dynasty), Ancient Liuao Town and Lishi island chains.

There are no tourist buses available. Limited bus service runs between villages, and the most common transport is motorcycles. You can also drive since the road condition is good.

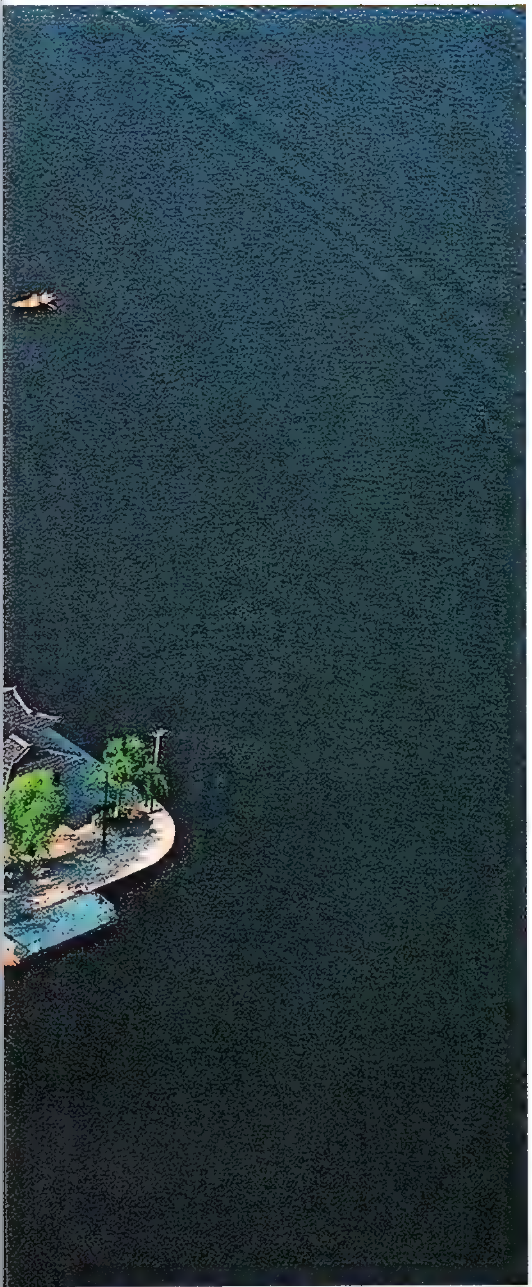
Most scenic spots in Zhangpu are undeveloped. There are hardly any restaurants, hotels or supermarket. Admission fee is low, or even free of charge. The admission fee of Zhaojiabao and National Geological Garden are ¥15 and ¥10 respectively.

1.

THE SPRING CITY OF JINAN

Photos by Hou Heliang, Qu Jinxiang, Anita Yeung, Xue Yao
Article by Anita Yeung

For tourists in Jinan, Shandong Province, the numerous spring mouths are no doubt the must-see scenic spots. However, today's spring city is encountering problems of drought and pollution. To attract tourists, the only hope for Jinan is to restore the beautiful scene of spring water and weeping aspen trees as described in the *Lao Can's Travel Notes* (A famous travel journal written in Qing Dynasty).



Since the *Travel Notes of Lao Can* described Jinan City as a place abundant of springs and aspen trees, people who come to Jinan will not miss visiting Baotu Spring and Daming Lake in order to verify the scene mentioned in the novel. Following this tourists' tradition, I also visited Baotu Spring.

The Baotu Spring had been drying up on and off for two and a half years (over 900 days) from 1999 to 2001. When I entered the park and passed Shuyu Spring and Old Golden Thread Spring, I arrived at the three spring mouths of Baotu Spring in front of Guanlan Pavilion. The spring mouth was lain under the water surface. Clear and roaring spring water kept gushing out.

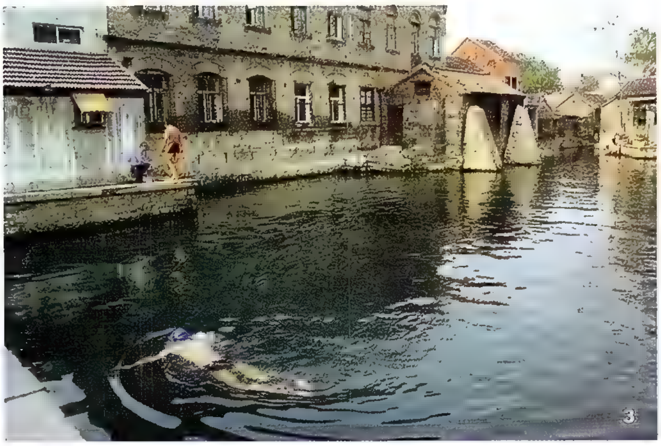
Jinan is Closely Linked to Springs

Senior Jinan citizens will tell you that decades ago there was abundant water in the springs in Jinan. It is said that at that time when people pulled out any brick from the ground, spring water would just come out from the hole! Regretfully, underground water has been overused as the population grew and the industry developed.

Without the springs, Jinan's attraction for tourists would have been none. This used to embarrass Jinan people a lot. However, the drying gave alert to the Jinan authorities and made them realised that maintaining the springs could be more important than building skyscrapers.

The springs in Jinan undoubtedly come from underground water, but why does Jinan have such an abundant stock of underground water? Well, the terrain in Jinan is high in the south and low in the north. And since the southern mountainous area is made up of lime stone, and gaps within the stone are like water pipes, bringing rain water downward to Jinan. The rain water is blocked by rocks when they reach under the city and the water pressure increases. Finally the water streams gush out from the gaps in the ground and form natural springs. Famous springs in Jinan such as Baotu Spring and Pearl Spring are also formed this way. However, other researches pointed out last year that the amount of water in the Yellow River would affect the scale of springs directly, but this

1. **Springs can be seen all round Jinan, which is worthy of the name of Spring City. (by Hou Heliang)**
2. **Ancient Shuyu Spring (by Qu Jinxiang)**
3. **The Royal Pool located among civilian houses has become a public swimming pool. (by Anita Yeung)**



saying is still to be further proved. What can be certain is that only when the underground water level is higher than 26.98 m, Baotu Spring will gush out.

Behind the Quancheng Road

The Quancheng Square completed in 1999 is located outside the east gate of the Baotu Spring Park. This huge square (780 m long and 230 m wide) connects the Baotu Spring in the west and Heihu Spring in the east.

After walking for a while on the square and turning north, I came to Quancheng Road, another main commercial street in Jinan. Here I could see new buildings, fashionable shops and chain restaurants that form a prosper image of metropolitan.

Then entering through an inconspicuous passage name Furong Street near the Xinhua Bookstore on Quancheng Road, I suddenly found that it was an old district behind the beautiful Quancheng Road.

The area near Furong Street is the only remaining fruitful old urban area in downtown Jinan. In early 20th Century, Furong Street was a very fashionable street like the present Quancheng Road, full of optical shops, photo shops, restaurants, dental clinics, libraries, shoe and hat shops, and all other shops one could think of, which was appealing to the eyes. But today only the names of those shops are left on the doorheads for the modern people to imagine the past glorious ages.

However, it is a bit difficult to concentrate on the old architecture in this area in great details because there are all sorts of food stalls and food hawkers all long the narrow streets and lanes. Hot smell of food and steam rises from hot pots. It is a big contrast to the ancient pattern of Quancheng Road.

Spring for the Mass and Lake for Appreciators

Turning into the narrow lane from the Furong Street, the view suddenly broadens and a perfectly square big pool appears. The pool is surrounded by residences and looks conspicuous. This was the spring pool called Wangfu (Royal) Pool. The Royal Pool is also called the Tassel-washing Spring. It is one of the 72 famous springs in Jinan. In ancient times, the water in the pool was abundant enough to make it a lake. Then it shrunk into a spring pool of 30 m in length and 19 m in width. However, compared with the Baotu Spring that could only see from a distance, the Royal Pool is more close to the life of the mass in Jinan.

Beside the Royal Pool lies Qushuiting Street. Along the street there is a small river lined with poplar and willow trees. Spring water gushing from the Pearl Spring nearby flows into the Daming Lake along this river. I walked along the small river and soon reached the portal of the Daming Lake.

Before the 1950s, Daming Lake was a lake in rich of fish and rice harvest. People living around it grew lotus and great cattail on the small pieces of lakefield and raised carp and lake prawn. Later on, the government

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1. Jinan City, previously described as "spring water and aspen trees in every household" by Liu E, has developed into a modern metropolitan. (by Hou Heliang)
2. The grand Quancheng Square is the symbol of the new look of the Spring City. (by Hou Heliang)
3. The unique Furong Street (by Hou Heliang)
4. Fascia of old shops on Furong Street (by Hou Heliang)
5. The famous Baotu Spring is a must-see for tourists. (by Hou Heliang)

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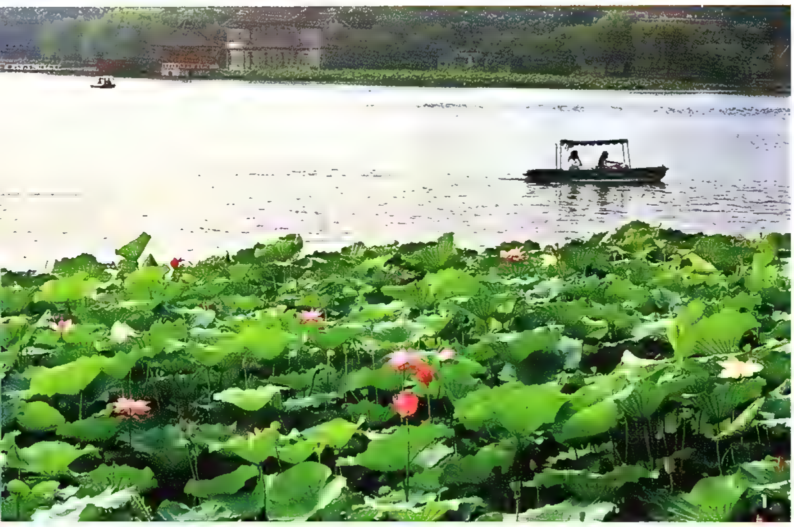
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removed the low banks among the fields in the lake and the silt. The government also relocated the residents in the lake area and made Daming Lake a scenic lake.

Daming Lake collects water from hundreds of springs and should be very clear, but the water quality I saw in Daming Lake was as bad as other lakes in China. In the past years, part of the urban sewage flowed into the Daming Lake and made this pearl of Jinan into a sewage collector. What makes me feel a bit better is that the authorities started the "Water Replacement Project" at the end of last year, which aimed to present a new look of Daming Lake by removing slit, drain out old water and lead in flowing spring water as well as cutting of the source of sewage. The effect depends on how successful the government's cutting on the source of sewage will be.

Spring Water is Tastier Than Tap Water

Early the next day, I went with strong interest to check out another famous spring named Heihu Spring. Heihu Spring is located by the moat. From afar, I saw a big crowd of local residents in front of a cave marked as Heihu Spring. Everybody was holding a big bundle of water containers such as buckets, one-litre plastic soda bottles and even kettles. They all queued up to take some spring water home.

I went close to Heihu Spring and found that the spring water was so full that it overflowed from the cave and formed water loblollies everywhere. The source of Heihu Spring is located in a cave on a steep cliff, so I could not see how the water flowed out. However, I could see the water gushed out from the mouths of three stone-carved tiger heads into the pool. Judging from the water flow from the three tiger mouths, I could image that the water flowing volume was very high. Most people gathered in front of the cave to get water directly from the source.

I started to chat with a granny who went with her husband to get water. I found out that she went there to get water once a week. She told me that the spring water was just too ideal for making tea to cook rice. Their home was four to five bus stops away from the spring but they took all the trouble to travel by bike to get the water. Affected by the passion of the neighbors, I filled up my little water bottle with the spring water and tested it. It was tasteless when I first drank it but the aftertaste was a little bit sweet.

The reason why Heihu Spring attracted so many people perhaps was related to the drinking water policy of Jinan government. Five years ago, in order to conserve water and protect the spring, the municipal government encouraged the water supply company of the city to use more water from the Yellow River as drinking water. At present, water supply from the Yellow River accounts for 70% of the total water supply volume of the city, the rest is from underground water in Jinan. Lessening the usage of underground water is surely an appropriate practice but after the spring resumed to gush, all spring mouths in the whole city produce about 200,000 m^3 of water every day (equal to the volume of 100 standard swimming pools), but Jinan City has not properly utilised the clear spring water and just let them flow into the rivers. Nobody would like

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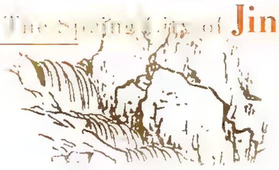
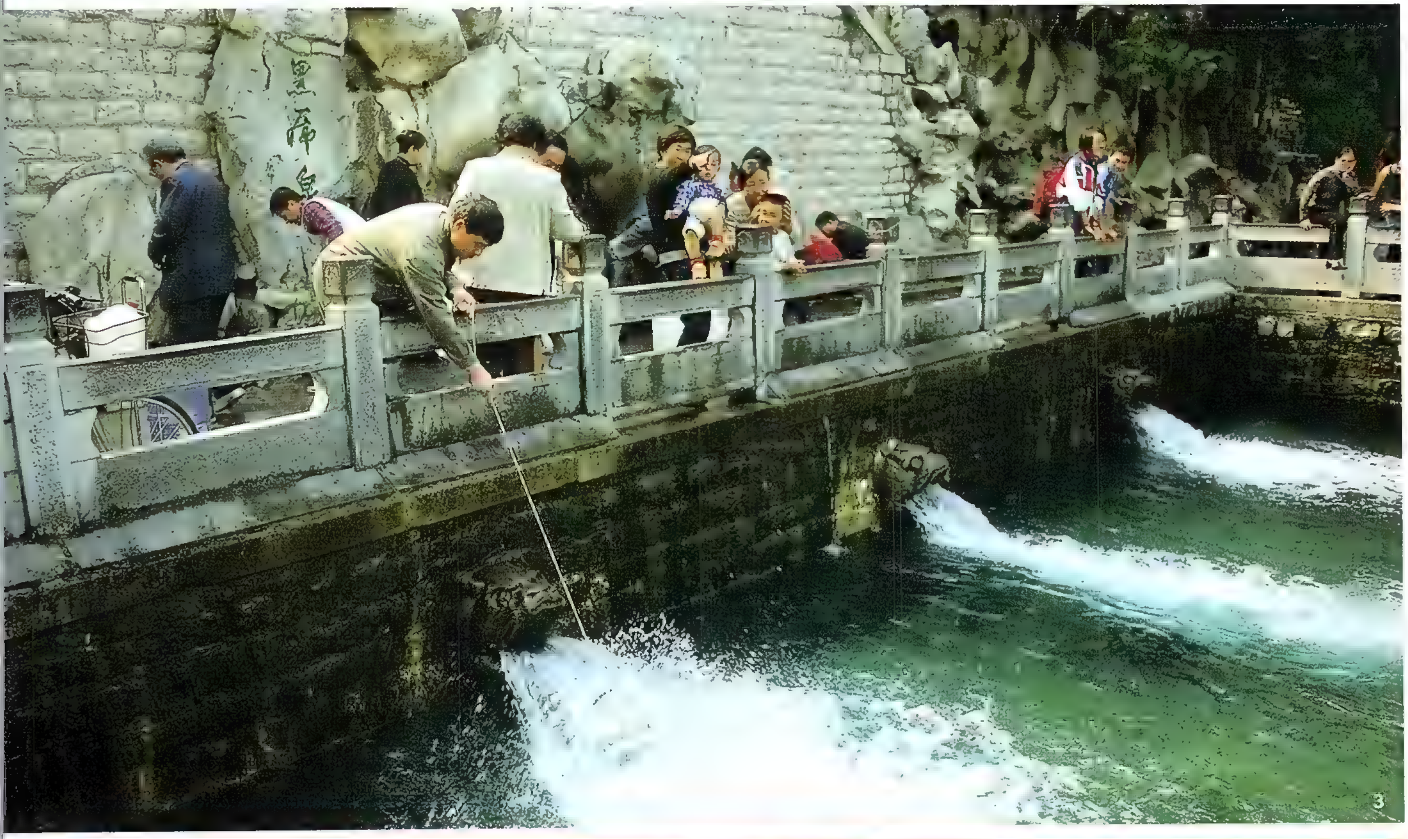


to drink the water from the Yellow river. No wonder Jinan people would rather go and get water by themselves.

As reported by media, the Famous Spring Office (a unique governmental organisation in Jinan) of the Municipal Government of Jinan City recently introduced a new proposal on protecting the springs, which included a suggestion of saving the spring water for sightseeing before consumption. Whilst the water quality of the Daming Lake is being harnessed, if this proposal can be finally implemented, then Jinan City may become a true Spring City that have springs for both attractions and drinking.

1. **Daming Lake has renovated it into a scenic lake. (by Xue Yao)**
2. **Residents getting water with all sorts of vessels (by Anita Yeung)**
3. **Heihu Spring has abundant and clear water and it attracts many residents to fetch water. (by Anita Yeung)**



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Travel Tips

Transportation: [illegible]

Lodging: [illegible] Spring and Quancheng Square [illegible]

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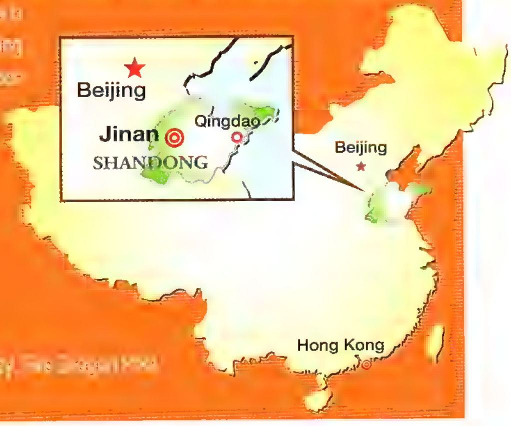
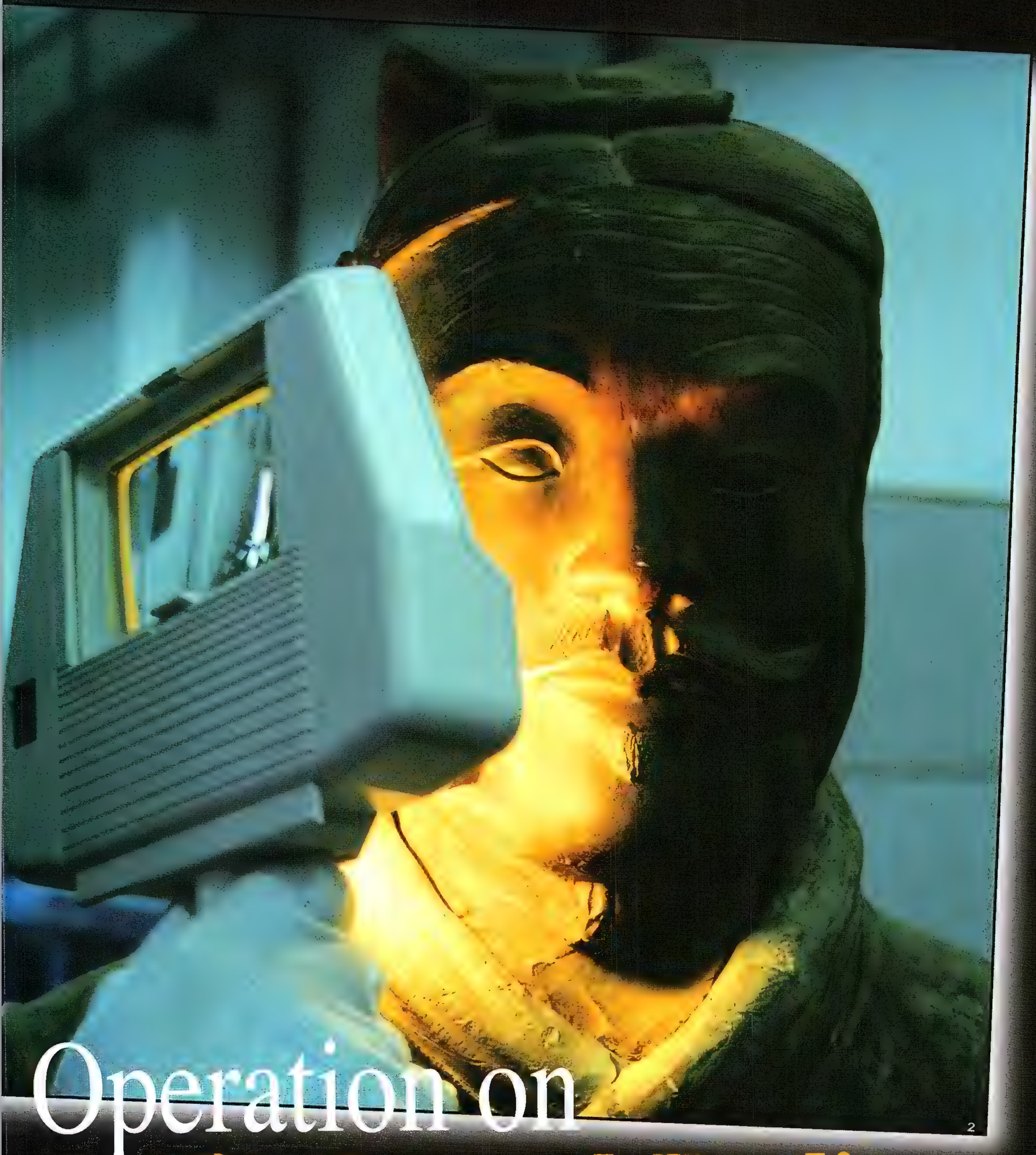
Main scenic spots: [illegible]



Cultural relics are just like human beings. They will have to see a doctor when they get old or develop an illness. But there are few such doctors in China, and they are less qualified comparing to the western experts. Dealing with the cultural relics left by the 5000-year history, China is running out of doctors. How to conserve these treasures is now a big challenge for relics' doctors.

1. An expert repairing a Terracotta Warrior
2. A Terracotta Warrior waiting for his "doctor"



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Operation on Cultural Relics

Photos by Zeng Nian
Article by Ma Yu

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In a laboratory of the China Relics Institute, relics doctors were consulting for an operation on a Buddha. The doctor in charge, Mr. Longobardi from Italy, masked and gloved, picked up a long necked bottle and spilt some chemicals onto a small dish. He then applied the liquid, with a swab, onto the Buddha feet and carefully scraped the wetted place with a scalpel.

This was a special operation room, where medical articles such as scalpels, mini dental drills, spirit lamps, swabs and absorbent cotton occupied the worktable. Several doctors were engaged in the preparation. The patient on the operation table was a 1000-year-old iron cast Buddha.

The iron Buddha, made in Jin Dynasty, was one of the 70 treasures that the Shanxi Provincial Museum sent here for renovation. Weathered in the long history, its body was eroded and oxidised. The rust was too thick that it not only covered the proper colour and pattern of the Buddha, but also penetrated into the body. The Buddha looked dull and lusterless. "Saving relics is saving life!" as Chinese researcher Zhan Changfa emphasised on the first day of the Sino-Italian relics conservation course. "Like human beings, relics may also fall ill. We repair polluted or destructed relics just as doctors take care of patients."

Finding the Right Medicine

The treatment of this iron Buddha followed exactly the same procedure of a surgery. Diagnosis was conducted to find out the cause of the "disease". A detailed plan, considered as the first significant step, was drawn before the operation.

Today, science played a leading role in the conservation of relics. With the

"Repairing relics is similar to ropewalking. One misstep is enough to turn a relic into a phoney. This is a regret not only in your life but also in the later generations."

help of an advanced portable X-ray analyser, we could easily find out the composition of the surface rust. What's more, the Italian expert brought with an endoscope. Inserting this micro camera into the Buddha stomach could transmitted the internal data onto the monitor. Endoscope had been widely used in medical application. Western countries had introduced this apparatus into the conservation of relics. However, it had just started in China.

Mr. Longobardi then conducted his first demonstration — washing the iron Buddha. This was not as simple as it looked. The process was complicated that involved disciplines such as chemistry, physics, and environment sciences. The rust was first sampled and analysed, to help choosing a cleansing method and protective chemicals. The selected chemical would first apply onto a small surface before an overall application.

The Complicated Operation

Mr. Longobardi applied his scalpel and swab like a doctor treating a patient. Every relic should be treated according to its own condition. In the case of this Buddha, the firm crust could only be removed with a scalpel or a micro drill.

One finger of this Buddha was broken. A liquid, which formed a protective film, was applied on the fracture surface, to ensure the bonding operation was reversible. Reversibility is a very important concept in relics conservation. It means the materials applied for repair should easily be removed, so damage could be avoided when conducting future operations. With the introduction of new technologies and materials, the repair is hoped to be more sophisticated.

Relics repair is an exacting job. As relics doctors, we all have a strong sense of responsibility and could not be more careful at each step of the operation. Every small step is recorded in detail and filed

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1. **Every moment should be recorded for later reference.**
2. **Measure must be done before packing.**
3. **Experts washing a container called "Ding" discovered in the Qin Bomb**
4. **Experts re-painting the Terracotta Warrior**

The renovation of relics is a long-term project. The most dangerous enemy for relics is mankind.

with photos, documentation and drawings for future reference. An expert once said, "Repairing relics is similar to ropewalking. One misstep is enough to turn a relic into a phoney. This is a regret not only in your life but also in the later generations."

The Lack of Awareness

My childhood was spent in a museum. Under the influence of my father, I developed a deep interest in relics. I later entered the museum service and became a professional relics repairer. I had heard, and even seen, that many relics were destroyed due to the lack of proper treatment. I attended the Sino-Italian relics conservation course, hoping to improve my professional qualification.

Zhan Changfa once said, "China was world known for its quantity of cultural relics. But China's relics conservation technologies were rather backward." After years of hard works, China has established its own relics protection system. But, for many reasons, it remains far behind developed countries in this field.

There is no standard or regulation on relics conservation. This explains the reason for the Chinese experts adopting the Italian relics protection standard when repairing the Buddha. While China has no more than 600 relics repairers, Italy has more than 6,000, with 800 bases in Rome. As a leading country in relics protection, Italy has set up its relics conservation standard systems since the beginning of the 20th century and has established many relics protection institutes. In Italy, relics repairers are highly esteemed.

In Europe, USA, Japan and other developed countries, relics protection and conservation has become a cross-field discipline. In China, few universities offer such curriculum and even fewer schools or departments are specialised a training relics protection professionals.

Preventive Measures Introduced

Compared to the huge amount of relics discovered, the investment on relics protection appears to be insignificant. Since 1950s, more than 400,000 historical and cultural sites were registered. Over 7,000 valuable sites were listed under provincial protection and, among them, 1,271 national protection. Protecting such a large number of cultural relics and historical heritages are far beyond the capacity of the few central research and protection units. Therefore, training more professional relics doctors becomes an urgent job.

Apart from human resources, fund and technology, the difference between Chinese and foreign approaches to relics protection remains a problem. In the past, attention was not paid to relics until they needed immediate salvation. Some relics were simply over-damaged that renovation was impossible. Fortunately, this concept has been changed nowadays

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and the idea of "preventative protection" has been accepted. In modern relics protection, the topmost principle is to minimise intervention, and operations will never be done unless absolutely necessary. Instead, preventive measures are taken in priority.

This reminded me of Cave 85 of Mogao Grottoes. Built in late Tang Dynasty, Cave 85 had 16 huge sutra paintings showing images of the Pure Land and the prosperous Tang Dynasty. In recent years, China was working with international experts, trying to renovate the paintings. The job was done exactly like the process of medical operation: found the cause, determined the therapeutic method, plugged monitoring devices, did the operation, observed and waited for the recovery. The whole "operation" took eight years, with "preventative protection" being its philosophy.

Who is the No.1 Relics Killer?

Mogao Caves is not the only one that faces such problems. Pagodas, ramparts, excavated relics and museum collections are all in the same trouble. What's the cause behind all these? The expert diagnosis can not be any more obvious: human activities change the environment and relics fall ill in the changed environment. Human beings are the No.1 killer!

Relics age naturally as human body does. But that is a slow process. Only when human activities are involved, the process is dramatically accelerated. For thousands of years, human beings have been devastating the world while creating splendid civilisations. Pollution in the past hundreds years, as a result of the Industrial Revolution, has damaged our environment with a force that is most destructive since the beginning of human civilisation. Not only China but the whole world faces the same problem. When some people are trying to save our civilisation, the others play the role of destructors. This battle perhaps will never end.

1. A helmet waiting to be recovered
2. Patience and time are neccessary when repairing relics.
3. Though complicated, relics repairing is challenging and rewarding.
4. "Doctor" taking care of a "duck"

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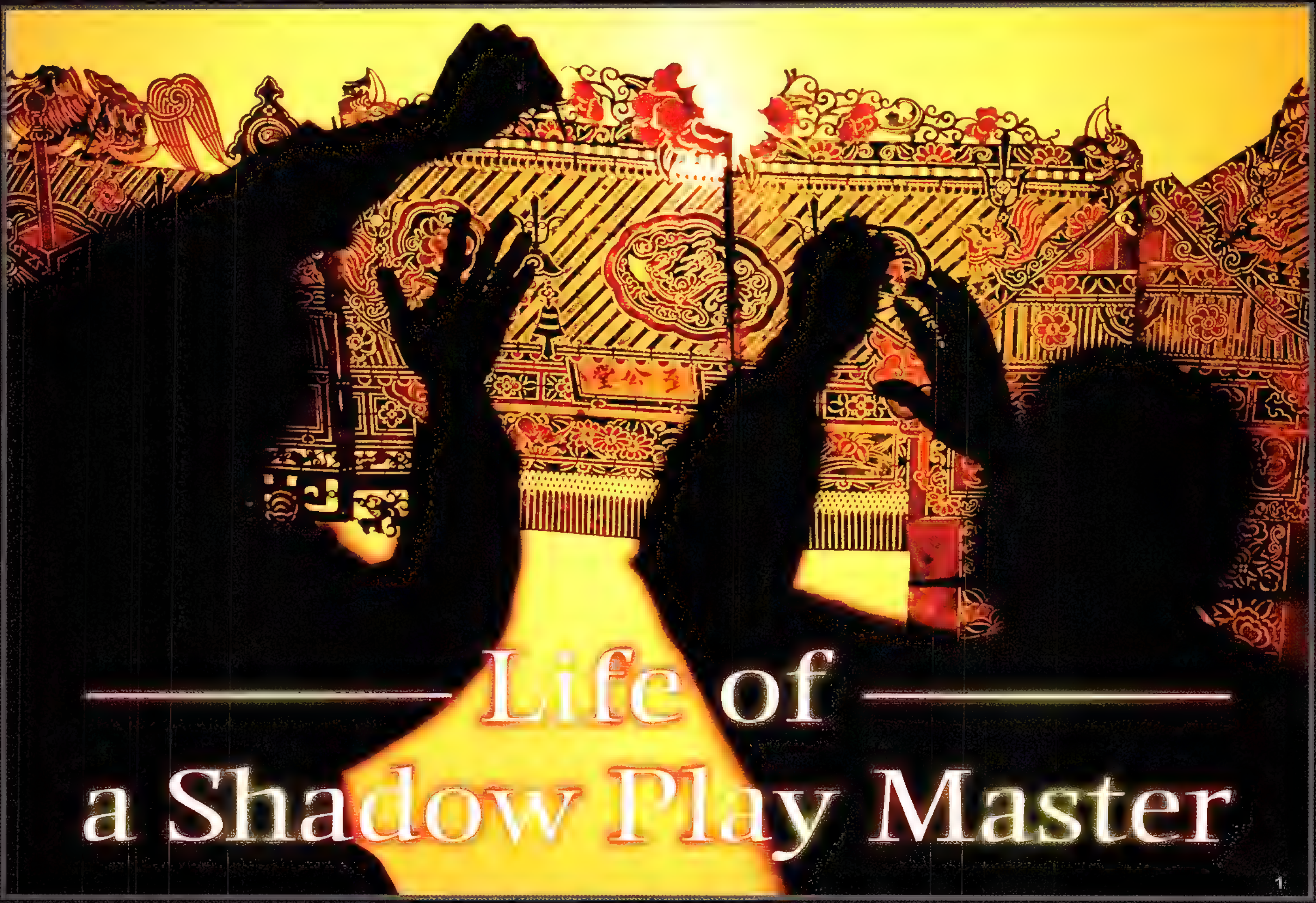
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Life of a Shadow Play Master

Photos & Article by Zeng Nian

Nanmai Village in Huaxian County, north of Mount Huashan in Shaanxi Province, is not much different from other villages in China. The villagers have made their living by growing corn, wheat and rape for thousands of years. It might have been an ordinary town, if not for its extraordinary shadow play master.

Nanmai Village lies on Panyuan — the oldest land on Loess Plateau. This land has become flat and plain after soil erosion for millions of years. And the wonderful Panyuan is covered with a carpet of golden rape flowers in April.

Today Mr. Pan will present a shadow play in downtown of Huaxian County. He takes his yueqin (a four-stringed moon-shaped Chinese mandolin) engraved with a pattern of an elderly person's head. Together with four of his shadow play society members, who also bundle their instruments, shadow boxes and screen to their bicycles, they soon hit the road.

Though shadow play is presented across the globe, it is acknowledged that China is the cradle of shadow play. For instance, shadow play is called "theatre d'ombres chinoises" (Chinese shadow play) in French. According to the earliest record, the westbound Mongolian military

1. It is acknowledged that China is the cradle of shadow play.
2. The shadow play performance is gaining worldwide recognition.
3. Delicate facial features of the shadow puppet

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forces spread the art of shadow play in the 13th century, and it has performed in Persia (today's Iran) since the 14th century. In the 18th century, Catholic missionaries introduced Chinese shadow play to France, and hence, shadow play was staged in Paris in 1776 and then further spread to Germany. And as we know, the great poet Goethe (1749-1832) had organised a shadow play based on a German story.

Since we arrive at Panyuan, Huaxian County, we may as well start our introduction on shawdow play from "wanwanqiang" (a local form of shadow play in Shaanxi Province). It is called wanwanqiang (meaning bowl-like) because the main metronome — a little bronze bell — in the shadow play is shaped like a small bowl. Wanwanqiang Shadow Play is also known as the Five-Man's Show. Its five performers are respectively called the pacesetter, action controller, first assistant, second assistant, and rhythm controller. As the pacesetter is the core of wanwanqiang, Mr. Pan must sing or read the lines and melodies of all the characters in a play. He is also the conductor of the play at large and shall play several instruments.

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The action controller takes charge of the actions, props arrangement and vocal accompaniment of all the characters in the play. In the old days when there was no electricity, he should also kindle the lamps for the play.

The first assistant is assigned a little work in the play and therefore can take relatively more instruments in the performing tour of the shadow play society.

The second assistant, also called "banhur", uses several instruments and assist the action controller to manipulate the puppets.

Last but not least, the rhythm controller, also called backstage performer, is in charge of the little bronze bell and other percussion instruments to control the rhythms of the play. In addition, the rhythm controller plays the most important role in setting up the stage and "liangzi".

Liangzi is the screen in a shadow play, a piece of snow-white cloth supported with sticks. The activities of

1. The performance is simply captivating.
2. Totally absorbed in the performance
3. Wanwanqiang Shadow Play is also known as the Five-Man Show.
4. All performers must work closely.

shadow play performers are not shown directly to the audience. Instead, the puppets are projected onto the screen. Through the manipulation of the action controller, audiences can enjoy the spectacles of majestic fights, love stories, funny jokes, etc.

There are about 15 to 20 km from Panyuan to Huaxian County. The highlight of the day is the rehearsal of the upcoming performance in Berlin, Germany. This will be the third performance in. In 1992, Professor Lu Shengzhong of the Beijing-based Central Fine Arts College led a journalist group on an inspection in Panyuan. After that, a special issue on Huaxian Shadow Play was published in Taiwan Voice of China magazine. From then on, Mr. Pan and his Guangyi Shadow Play Society have become famous worldwide.

Mr. Pan has participated in the film "The Man Alive" directed by Zhang Yimou. It was Zhang Yimou who came to Panyuan in person and invited Mr. Pan to Beijing where they finished the film. The film tells the life of a coxcomb whose ancestors had left a legacy of fame and wealth. After the legacy ran out, he kept only his skills of performing shadow play. With the vicissitudes of Chinese history, the hero in the film struggled like a rootless duckweed. The film became a great success in Cannes Film Festival.

Mr. Pan looks thin and always wears a Mickey Mouse hat. He has been given the nickname "bald boy" for over seven decades, also known as "Golden baldpate" after he became famous for his shadow play performance. By "golden", it means his scarred head becomes as precious as gold since he can perform well. Mr. Pan first played on stage and turned to be a great hit when he was 15 years old. He was adept in performing tragic stories. At the pinnacle of his tragic performance, the audience would often cry their eyes out.

In the past, mostly local well-off families or merchants financed sculpture artists to make puppets and other props, while the shadow play performers signed with shadow box owners. Since 1950, the wealthy families were no longer able to fund shadow play. At that time, Pan Jingyue bought in a batch of shadow boxes and founded Guangyi Shadow Play Society. Pan Jingyue's shadow boxes survived the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) when most of the shadow boxes in Huaxian County were burnt to ashes. After the Cultural Revolution, Pan Jingyue managed to develop the Guangyi Shadow Play Society.

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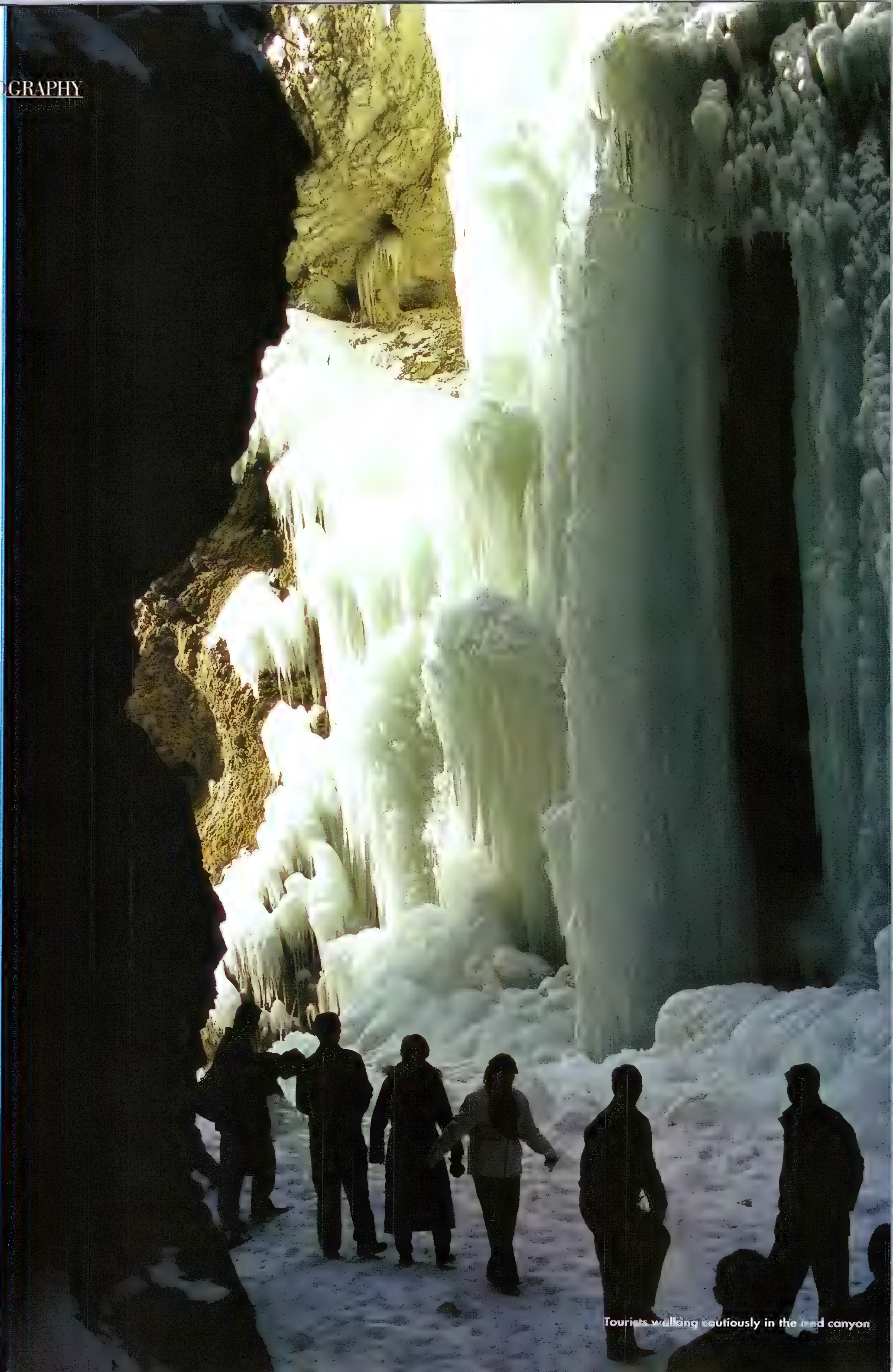
There have been a great many playwrights of shadow play in the history of Huaxian. The most noted one was Li Fanggui, who had written ten great plays. After Li failed many times in the Imperial Civil Examination, he lost heart and returned to Huaxian where he earned his living by teaching and enjoyed writing plays in his spare time. In 1810 (the 15th year of the reign of Jiaqing Emperor in Qing Dynasty), shadow play was prohibited to perform and Li Fanggui himself was pursued for arrest. Unfortunately, Li died among wormwood during his escape. Yet, his ten great plays remain popular to date.

With the unconscious passage of time, the five men have neared the downtoun area. Guangyi Shadow play Society will perform tens of scenes of the courtyard of the County's Cultural Museum. The highlights include "Village Festive Activities", "Itinerant Peddler Sells Groceries", "Jade Stone" and "Boat Steering". Some months after, the Society will perform the same highlights in Berlin.

1. Shadow play bonds people together.
2. Shadow play master often has to take on long and lonely journeys.
3. The art of shadow play
4. Setting up the stage for performance



Tourists walking cautiously in the iced canyon

The Glacial Beauty of Longnan Icefall

Photos and Article by Shi Baoxiu

Many people like photographing the beautiful view of waterfalls. However, an icefall at -10°C has another kind of appealing beauty. Every winter at Longnan Guan'e Gou valley in Gansu Province, not far away from Jiuzhaigou valley in Sichuan Province, icefalls of various sizes have become a new favourite spot for photography fans.

It was in the middle of January, during the coldest season of the year, that we arrived at the mountains. There had just been a big snowfall which had not yet melted in the shaded parts of the mountain. Since the snow was thick and the road was slippery, we had to park our jeep by the Scenic Spot Administration Office at the base of the mountain and continue by foot.

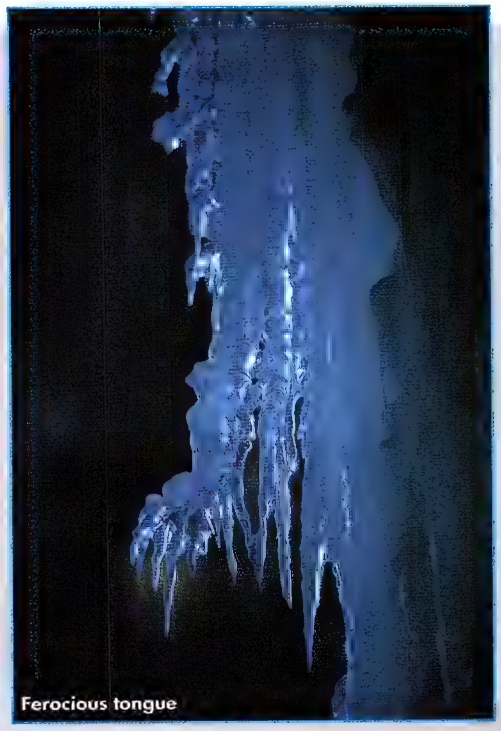
Shooting Skills: When the temperature drops to -10°C, any kind of digital camera is just about to collapse. At that time I thought it was a battery problem so I immediately installed a new battery, but still it would not last for more than five to six shots. I then realised it was the low temperature, so I put the battery into my pocket to warm it up with my body heat. I suggest that everyone should have a warm, spare battery ready and keep switching

Wonderful View of the Frozen Karst Topography

After walking for one kilometre, we entered the Guan'e Gou valley. Old trees with curvy and twisted trunks stood on the sheer cliffs on both sides of the channel. The stream beneath the canyon was almost completely covered by ice and snow. After a 10-minute walk on a small bumpy path between the streams, we arrived at the site where the icefall hung vertically on the cliffs. Local friends told us that since the waterfall here does not have a big runoff, especially in the winter, the waterfall was just like a heavy rain. When the dense water drops froze many different strange shapes were formed. Some looked like very tall trees, others like blooming flowers, asparagus shooting from the

Water drop turns into ice

Hanging icefall with detailed pattern



Ferocious tongue

ground or stretched dragon claws.

Shooting Skills: Shooting icefall is like shooting snow view. In terms of photometry, one or two extra scale of exposure is needed on top of the normal photometry value, as the ice surface is smooth, white and shiny. If the photometry is not increased, the photo you get will appear dark and pale. Moreover, photos of ice and snow shot in shadow normally appear to be bluish and purplish. A warm colour filter, such as Wratten 82 can be use to reduce this. If there is direct sunshine on the icefall, the contrast between the bright spots and the dark spots will be a problem in terms of exposure. For example, if the exposure is set according to the bright parts, hiberarchy will not be seen in the dark parts; if the exposure is set according to the dark parts, then the bright parts will be too white and will lose the detailed hatching and sense of reality. The general solution is to increase the exposure value of the part between the bright and dark parts in order to give consideration to both. Of course, if one part is particularly colourful, the other parts will be less.

Pattern of the icefall top

Danger Hidden behind the Beauty

I was about to walk closer to look at it more carefully when a friend suddenly pulled my sleeve and told me not to go any closer as it was dangerous. At noon the temperature would increase and the thick and tall ice column would begin to melt. The ice which was closer to the cliff would melt faster and lose the solid adherence, the ice column that weighed several tons could collapse any instant. I asked if the icefall would be gone in a few days. My friend laughed and said that in this cold weather when the temperature dropped below 10°C, the rainfall-like waterfall would continuously freeze to hanging ice, and the shapes and patterns would grow and keep changing all the time so that one would never get bored at looking at them. I went into a huge ice cave on the shady side and looked out. I felt like being inside a crystal palace. Thinner ice looked green while thicker ice had a greyish dark blue colour. We left the iced canyon and continued walking, and soon reached a set of icefalls that looked like a hanging bamboo curtain. The smooth lines lay among complicated details and the colours was even richer than those of the first icefall.

Deep Canyon Waterfall Formed by the Orogeny

At this time when I looked at the cold forest along the cliffs, the trees were old and lichen and hairy grass grew on their trunks. It already had a strong sense of virgin forest. At that time I further noticed that the sheer mountains were all made up of dense shale. Most of them were vertical and seldom horizontal. It seemed that in the ancient times of orogeny, there was a drastic shell extrusion and collision here that made the originally vertical shale stick up abruptly and formed perilous peaks and narrow and long deep canyons one after another. The ruptures of cliffs formed those falls. When streams flowed by, they formed waterfalls. As my local friends told me, if I were there in the summer, the view would be purely green mountains, clear springs and rumbling waterfalls. Everything would have been flowing. That would certainly be another appealing view.

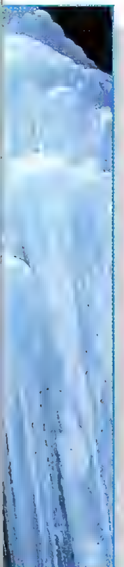
Icy stream

Bottom of the icefall

Delicate icefall

Icefalls that look
stalactites

Icefall in the canyon



Hanging ice at 4-5 m long

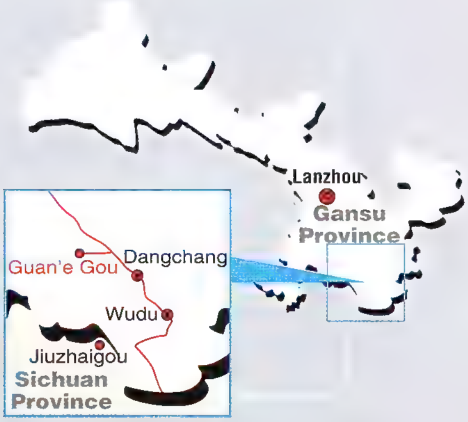
Photographing Tips

Shooting seasons: The waterfalls in Guan'e Gou valley at all sizes begin to freeze in December and will not completely melt until early April. This period is ideal for shooting photos.

Transportation: the Guan'e Gou valley is located in the mountains in Dangchang County in Wudu District. There are coaches from Lanzhou to Dangchang County every day. The journey is about 350 km. The Guan'e Gou valley is 10 km from the county capital town. Vehicles are there for rent. The road conditions are good.

Lodging: Dangchang Hotel, standard room at round ¥100, common rooms (without bathroom) at ¥60.

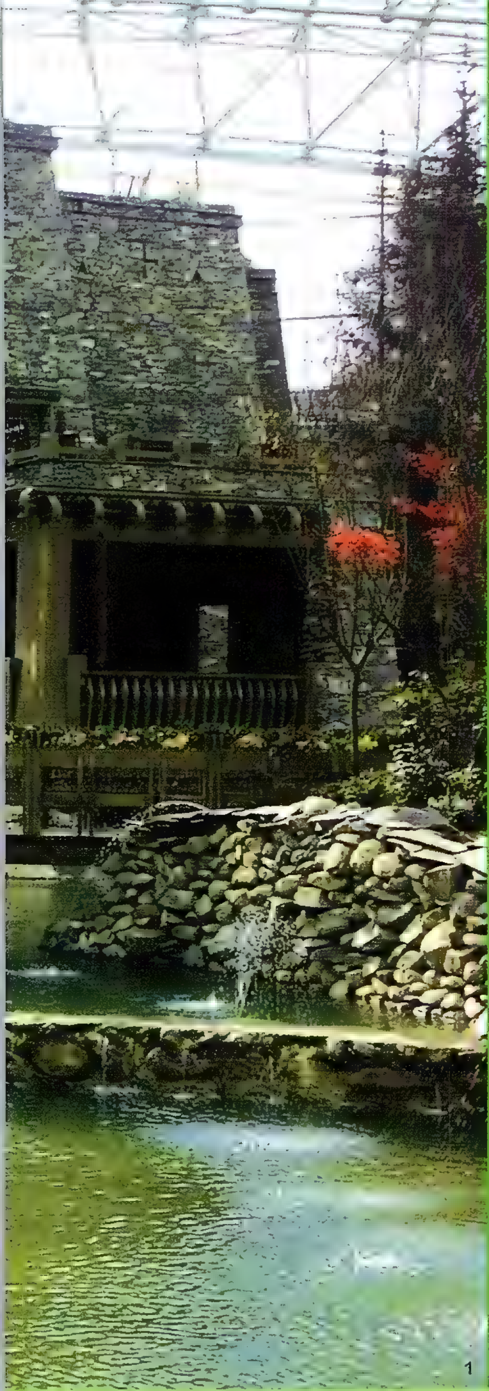
Local specialties: Angelica, Chinese rhubarb, codonopsis pilosular and exidia.



A PERFECT GETAWAY

JIUZHAI PARADISE

Photos & Article by
Chen Tianquan



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In the picturesque Jiuzhaigou, a fairyland renowned for its beauty nationwide, there is an extremely luxurious five-star resort hotel, Jiuzhai Paradise. It is designed with eye-catching features of local nationality, and it blends in perfectly with the great nature in its proximity.

Jiu-Huang Airport

Since the opening of Jiuzhai Huanglong Airport (Jiu-Huang Airport, for short) in 2003, the number of tourists visiting Jiuzhaigou has kept rising. During the three major national holidays (October 1-7, May 1-7, and Spring Festival), Jiuzhaigou is practically crowded with people here and there. In order to avoid the bustling scene, I chose to visit Jiuzhaigou in winter.

On the airplane flying to Jiuzhaigou, I saw no seat unoccupied, however. This was because in such a low season, the number of air flights commuting between Jiuzhaigou and Chengdu had been cut down to two in a single day. Previously, it took at least 11 hours to drive from Chengdu to Jiuzhaigou; but nowadays, one can expect an air journey of 40 minutes only.

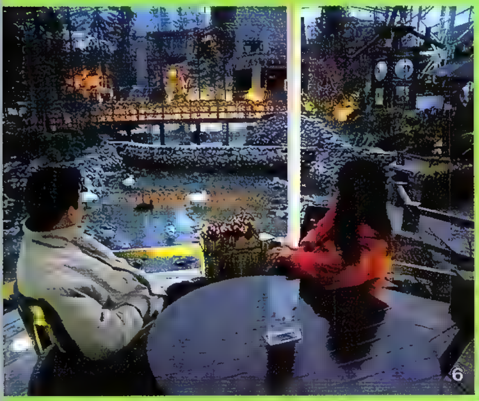
Jiu-Huang Airport is nestled on an upland being 3,500 m high above sea level, and it has been one of the three major airports on highland in the country. It takes about one hour to drive from this airport to Jiuzhaigou. Since the ride is all the way downhill, visitors do not need to concern themselves with altitude sickness.

Jiuzhai Paradise

It has been well known that Jiuzhaigou is surrounded by forests and precipitous peaks. The five-star Jiuzhai Paradise appears in a chic modern style and features a glass-made vault, distinguishing itself as a unique establishment of its kind in the country. Under the vault there is the lobby of the hotel, where it is built like an ancient village. The reception area has a small bridge, a shallow pond, lovely swans and bitterns, and traditional architecture of Qiang nationality's style.

Walking through the lobby, there is a square designed in the ancient architectural style of the local Qiang nationality. There is a towering blockhouse, surrounded by a few stone houses of restaurants, offering Sichuan hotpot, Tibetan-Qiang flavour dishes, South Korean style BBQ, Japanese, Southeast Asian and Western food, etc.

The hotel has seven guestroom mansions, erected in a fan-like shape all on the same side. I spent over 10 minutes roaming from my room to the restaurant on the other side, and passed by an exhibition hall, a souvenir stand, a small



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1. The lobby in Jiuzhai Paradise is decorated as an ancient village of Qiang nationality.
2. Jiuzhai Paradise is surrounded by Ganhaizi Lake and mountains.
3. Hotel lobby (right) and Hot Spring Centre (left) are both covered by a glass-made vault.
4. The tranquil Jiuzhai Paradise
5. Towering stone tablet in the lobby
6. The unique guest room

bridge and some residential houses of Qiang nationality's style.

Hot Spring, Ski Slope and Ancient City

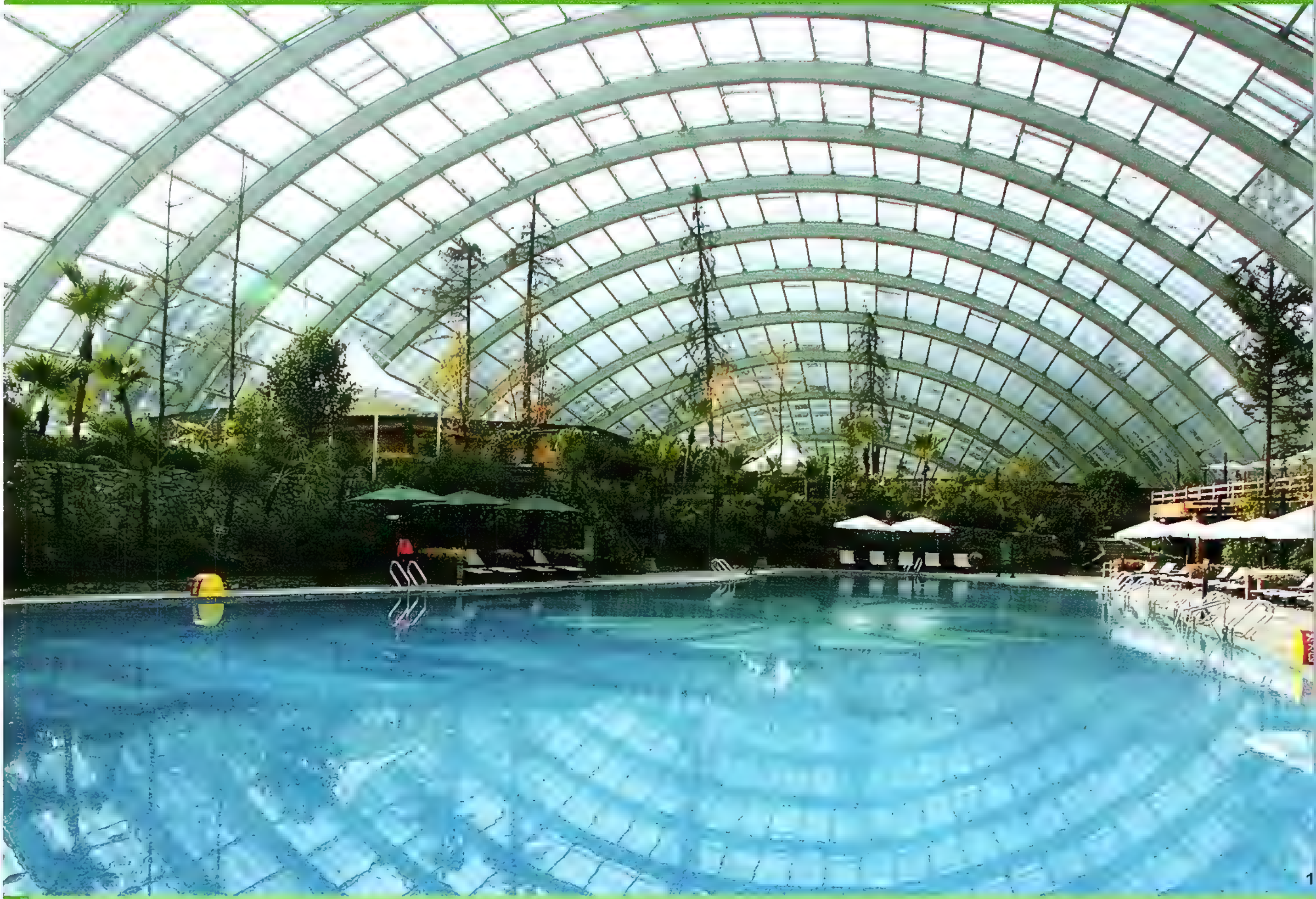
Next to the square there is an Indoor Hot Spring Centre. It also features a glass-made vault, looking like a huge goose egg. There are five hot spring ponds inside, plus a standard-sized swimming pool. On the sides of the swimming pool there stand the ancient fir trees. Architects had drilled a few holes for the trees. The admission for the hot spring ponds and swimming pool is ¥158. In winter times, the hotel will open its ski slope. The ski hill has a moderate degree of slope that is suitable for beginners.

The hotel completed the Phase I work of the Jiuzhai Paradise project. Developers of this project continued to build the Phase II work, featuring a Jiabo Ancient City, which would house some three or four-star hotels, restaurants and theater.

Immortals' Pond

One of the developments of the Phase I work is the Immortals' Pond scenic spot. This scenic spot boasts not only quite lakes, but also layered landforms. Previously, there were few roads leading to this area, so not many visitors came here. Nowadays, as developers had renovated existing roads and built up new roads, it had become much easier to visit.

The area has a Water Curtain Cave, Gold & Silver Beach, Yao Pond, Qing-Long Lake, Lotus Platform Colour Pond, Fairy Water Pond, Immortal Frog Lake and Touch Buddha Cave, etc. After reaching a peak, one can return to the entrance point from the other side backwards.



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THE QIANG NATIONALITY The Tibet and Qiang Nationalities Autonomous Prefecture in Aba Region of Sichuan Province has a population of about 850,000 people, and about 150,000 of them are of the Qiang nationality. The history of Qiang nationality can be traced back to the ancient Chinese Yin-Shang Times; in fact, inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells of the Shang Dynasty (the 16th~11th Century B.C.) has already borne descriptions of the Qiang nationality. The ancient people of this nationality were then engaged in animal husbandry. Actually, the Qiang nationality is the descendants of these ancient human beings. Blockhouse is the most characteristic architectural form of Qiang nationality. It is usually dozens of metres high, and built up by piling up random rubbles. Blockhouses are quite solid, and they are used as food storage.

Gold & Silver Beach, Yao Pond and Lotus Platform Colour Pond impressed me most profoundly. The clear water flowed over rich coloured mineral earth, and blended in well with white snow, thus working out a diversity of picture perfect scenes. Gold & Silver Beach appeared in two colours, and had been composed of flowing calcified substances. The Lotus Platform Colour Pond was nestled in an area characterised by variated landforms, and comprised an array of coloured pools. The Water Curtain Cave, which usually featured gurgling water streams, had but turned out a well iced waterfall in winter times; I felt so lucky to see such a great scene.

Luxurious Tour

The admission fee access to this pond is ¥398 per person (guests staying in Jiuzhai Paradise are entitled to enjoy discounts). The price includes a guided journey in tour bus and a buffet lunch.

The pricey admission is to make up the costs of development work and to limit the number of incoming visitors. As a matter of fact, the Immortals' Pond used to receive up to 6,000 persons a day originally; however, in order to alleviate the man-made damage on the ecological environment in here, developers insisted that at most 2,000 persons were allowed for entry in a single day.

1. The swimming pool and hot spring pool in the hot spring centre
2. Yao Pond is composed of multiple calcification ponds of different sizes.
3. The ski area outside the hotel
4. The icicles of the Water Curtain Cave
5. The footpaths around the Immortals' Pond
6. The new Jiu-Huang Airport

Accommodation in Jiuzhai Paradise

Location: Ganhaizi Scenic Spot, Tibet and Qiang Nationalities Autonomous Prefecture, Aba Region, Sichuan Province (about 20 km away from the mouth of Jiuzhaigou)

Room rates: ¥1,180 (low season) - ¥8,888 (high season)

A "Free Trip Package" included four flights (taking off from Hong Kong) and three nights' stayed in Jiuzhai Paradise Holiday-making Centre (about ¥6,000).

Inquiry: (852) 2956 6838

Travel Tips

Air tickets: Shenzhen-Chengdu: ~¥900 yuan; Chengdu-Jiuzhaigou: ~¥610.

Transport: Jiu-Huang Airport-Jiuzhaigou: Shuttle bus is unavailable in low season; Taxi: ¥200/day in the daytime, ¥260/day at night; Time: ~1.5 hours.

Fare to Jiuzhaigou: ¥80 in low season.

Admission of Jiuzhaigou Scenic Spot: ¥100 yuan in low season.

Transport between Songpan and Huanglong: ~¥220-260 (chartered car).

Admission of Huanglong Scenic Spot: ¥70 in low season.

"Eat as You Go"

The popular snacks in China are surprisingly simple to make. However, the chefs are never slipshod in the whole cooking process.

These popular snacks come in small portions and are available everywhere. This article gives a brief summary of the famous popular snacks in the 12 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions. Go savour these unique cuisines and eat as you go!

京 Beijing

Court Delicacies of Yuan Dynasty — Ai Wowo

In every Spring Festival, one can find the Ai Wowo available at food stalls in Beijing. It is a snack made of rice dumpling with all sorts stuffing such as haw, sesame and white sugar, pea flour cake and mashed date. A fresh Ai Wowo looks round and white. It tastes soft, sweet and a bit sticky.

Two Ways of Eating Donkey Rolls About

Donkey Rolls About is a funny nickname that is much more interesting than its original name — Bean Flour Dumpling. When preparing this dumpling, a chef needs to roll the cooked dumpling on the table in order to add bean flour to it. The scene looks like a donkey rolling on the ground to ease its itching.

There are two types of Donkey Rolls About: one is a steamed bean flour dumpling with fried bean flour on top, and it is made into a sheet, rolled up with mashed bean stuffing and sliced into small piece. The other type is made of a blend of brown sugar and cooked bean flour. It is made into the shape of a ball and sweet osmanthus tonic is added on top before serving.

Mega Pie — Doornail Meat Pie

The pie is five centimetres in diametre and three centimetres in thickness, just like a normal burger. It got this funny name because it looks very much like a doornail on an ancient city gate.

The most popular stuffing is beef and scallion. A good Doornail Meat Pie needs to have a thin peel and a big portion of stuffing.

Prices for reference: The above-mentioned snacks are available at Muslim restaurants and supermarkets. The price of Ai Wowo and Donkey Rolls About are ¥3-5 each. The Doornail Meat Pie is ¥3-5 with porridge. The bill should be within ¥20 even if you add a bottle of beer and a small dish.

津 Tianjin

The Secrete Of Half-Fermented Flour Peel — Goubuli Dumpling

The inventor of Guobuli dumpling has an infant name as Goubuli. The reason why it ranks top among all the dumplings in Tianjin is its dough sheets.

If the dumpling is made of fermented flour, then the dough sheet will absorb the majority of the meat juice in the stuffing. In this case the stuffing would lose its taste while the sheets would be less flavoursome. But the half-fermented dough sheet of Goubuli dumpling is made of fat and half-fermented flour, which preserves the meat juice. Cixi, the Queen Mother of Qing Dynasty, loved the Goubuli dumpling so much that she sent her messenger for it.

There are strict requirements for the stuffing. The high quality port should have 70% fat meat and 30% lean meat, and it is mixed with mashed ginger, sesame oil, shallot and sauce.

Twisted out from Three Pieces of Noodle — The Pretzel (Fried Dough Twist)

The crispy pretzel is one of the famous snacks of Tianjin. Of the varieties, the Guifaxiang assorted stuffed pretzel is the most famous.

Guifaxiang Pretzel is made of three pieces of noodle, namely the crisp stuffed noodle, the white noodle and the noodle topped with sesame. Crisp stuffed noodle is made of hot oil, flour, sweet osmanthus, Fujianese ginger, white sugar, greengage, walnut kernel and confected orange peel. White noodle is made of flour with sugar juice. The noodle topped with sesame is made of a part of the white noodle with sesame on top. The three pieces of noodle are twisted together, then folded and twisted again. Then it will be deep-fried in a 220°C boiling oil till the colour turns golden. If sugar candies and cucumber slices are added, it becomes assorted stuffed pretzel.

Huaiyang Cakes and Dumpling with a Hundred Years of Fame

Among the variety of Huaiyang cakes, the Sanding Dumpling, Jade Shaomai (a steamed dumpling with the dough gathered at the top), Flaky Pastry and Soup Stuffed Dumpling are the most popular.

Fuchun Teahouse was established in 1885. It is a restaurant well-known at home and aboard with a history of over 100 years. It is famous for its authentic Huaiyang cuisine. Its Sanding Dumpling, Jade Shaomai and Flaky Pastry has won awards one after another. Besides, the teahouse also prepares various kinds of crispy cakes of the seasons. No wonder people are crowded the teahouse starting from six o'clock in the morning. I have to remind you that when savouring the Fuchun Soup Stuffed Dumpling, which is the pride of the teahouse, you should suck the soup before you eat the whole dumpling, but you should be careful not getting your mouth scalded by the hot soup!

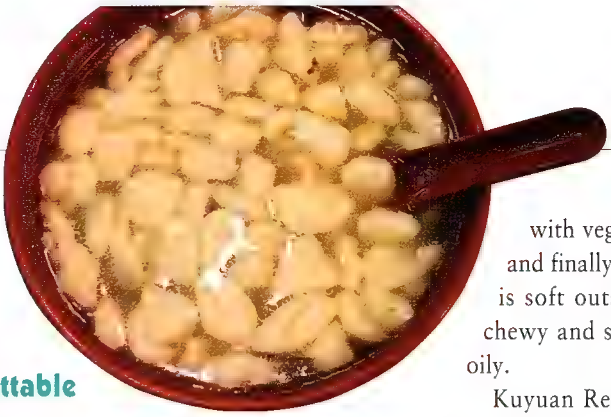
Recommendation: **Fuchun Teahouse**
Address: 35 Desheng Bridge, Guoqing Road, Yangzhou City
Reservations: (514) 723 3326
Prices: Cake packages range from ¥8 to 28. Each package is included the two most famous cakes — the Flaky Pastry and Jade Shaomai.

苏 Jiangsu

Mashed Date and Sesame Cake

As early as in the 46th year of the Qianlong Reign of Qing Dynasty (1781 A.D.), mashed date and sesame cake was made in Mudu. The shop was then called "Fei Cui Tai". When Emperor Qianlong was inspecting the areas to the south of the lower reaches of the Changjiang River and was living in his Xanadu (imperial palace) in Biling Rocks, the Fei Mai Cake was served for the him as imperial dishes. In the 7th year of the Guangxu Reign (1881 A.D.), the Fei Cui Tai shop transferred the sesame cake business to others and renamed itself as Gan Sheng Yuan. Up till today, the cake made with pine nuts, rose, mashed date and sesame made by Gan Sheng Yuan is still very popular.

Price for reference: Mashed Date and Sesame Cake at ¥10 per box.



浙 Zhejiang

Cat's Ear — An Unforgettable Name

Cat's Ear, a traditional snack of Hangzhou City. The production process is to prepare a paste with 500 g of fine flour and divide it into over 900 small sheets. The preparation method is simple but the presentation is good. When served, one can have chick dices, ham dices, mushroom, dried scallop and bamboo shoot slices to supplement to the flavour.

Recommendation: **Zhi Wei Guan**

Profile: Established in 1913, the Zhi Wei Guan restaurant had changed from a noodle shop into a fast-food restaurant with modern furnishing. It sells a variety of cuisine with authentic Hangzhou flavour such as Cat's Ears, fresh meat dumpling and Wushan Flaky Pastry.

Address: 83 Renhe Road

Transport: Take buses Y8, K55 or No. 555 and alight at Hubin Station.

Business hours: 6:30~24:00

Prawn and Eel Noodle — The Three Steps in Processing Eel Meat

Prawn and Eel Noodle is one of the traditional noodle styles in Hangzhou. The eel meat is first fried with vegetable oil, then again is fried with lard and finally is braised with sesame oil. The eel meat is soft outside and crispy inside. The noodle is chewy and smooth while the soup is thick yet not oily.

Kuyuan Restaurant is like a fast-food restaurant and is very trendy. The exact amount of ingredients used in each course is marked on the menu. For example, a prawn and eel noodle is made with 100 g of eel meat and 40 g of prawn.

Recommendation: **Kuiyuan Restaurant**

Address: 154 Jiefang Road, Hanghzhou City (Headquarters), 348 Wenhui Road (New Branch)

Transport: Take bus No. 67 or 155 and alight at Guan Xiang Kou Station (Headquarters), take bus No. 6 or 45 and alight at Fire Prevention Building (New Branch)

Business Hours: 9:00~-3:30 and 16:00-20:00

Prices for reference: Prawn and Eel Noodle: ¥25 per bowl, other noodle such as Plain Crab Cream Noodle is ¥18 per bowl, Cram Cream and Maw Noodle is ¥40 per bowl, Prawn and Abalone Noodle is ¥55 per bowl, Crab Cream and Abalone Noodle is ¥98 per bowl, Crab Cream and Shark's Fin Noodle is ¥158 per bowl.

Laba Bean Curd — Up to three months' Storage Period

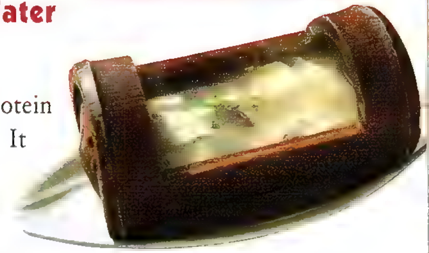
Laba is the period around the 8th day of the last Chinese lunar month. At this time, all households in Qianxian and neighbouring areas at the foot of Huanshan Mountain in Anhui Province are to dry bean curd in the sunlight. Dried shrimp or preserved ham can also be added. After being dried, it is hung in a bunch on a grass string at places with good ventilation, ready to be picked. It is convenient and can be kept for up to three months. Laba bean curb is ready to serve, or it can be fried with other material such as leek or bean sprout, or it can be made into Laba porridge.

Huangshan Brake Cake — Inexpensive but Nutritious

Every spring, clusters of brake can be seen at Huangshan Mountains. This kind of brake is nutritious and is rich in carotene, protein and fibre. It can be pickled with salt and used as stuffing.

徽 Anhui

The Slippery Huangshan Mountains Spring Water Bean Curd



Bean curb is rich in protein among vegetable foods. It contains eight types of aminophenol as well as unsaturated fatty acid and lecithin that are rare in animal food. Frequent consumption of bean curd can safeguard the liver, improve metabolism and enhance immunity.

Legendary Cuisine of Huangshan Mountains

There are 1,470 kinds of plants grown in the Huangshan Mountains alone. Many of these plants are edible, such as Huaru mushroom, agaragar, ping mushroom, white fungus, black fungus, gyrophora and alpine gyrophora, as well as brake, daylily, yellow daylily and water dropwort.

The cooking methods for these vegetables are varied. For instance, there are about 17 different ways to prepare bamboo shoot. As for the types of bean curds, there are the soft bean curd, fermented bean curd, Kwan-yin bean curd, Laba bean curd and acorn bean curd. Such natural plants are the main specialties of Anhui style cuisine.

Fujian

Magic Peanut Soup That Melts in Mouth

Peanut soup is a snack of Xiamen. When preparing, peanut is dipped in boiling water so that the skin can be removed, then it is put into a pot and braised with mild fire till it softens, then sugar is added while the peanut is further braised. It can be served with leek cake, Xiamen vegetable cake, meat cake, greenbean cake and fried sticky rice dumpling. Among these, the leek cake uses pig's leg meat, mushroom and shrimp as stuffing.

Bamboo Shoot Jelly — Sipunculid Worm

Judging from the name one may think that it is a snack made with bamboo shoot, but it is actually made with a kind of mollusk called sipunculid. These small animals live in shallow rivers and contain colloid. It is two to three inches long with a dark and hideous appearance.

When preparing for this dish, the sipunculids are to be emptied their gut before cooking into jelly in the pot. Then they can be stored into small bowls for cooling and forming bamboo shoot jelly. It can be served with soy sauce, northern vinegar, sweet vinegar, chilly sauce, mustard, mashed garlic, jelly fish, coriander and sliced radish.

There are many ways of cooking sipunculid. Apart from making it into jelly, it can be stirred, fried or cooked as soup, or cooked with ginseng and lean pork.

Best Served Hot — Xiamen Meat Glutinous Rice Dumpling

There are many kinds of glutinous rice dumpling in Fujian Province, including salty glutinous rice dumpling, bean glutinous rice dumpling, sweet glutinous rice dumpling and meat glutinous rice dumpling, but Xiamen meat glutinous rice dumpling is the most famous among them. Xiamen meat glutinous rice dumpling has mushroom, dried shrimp, chestnut and pork as stuffing. It is delicious but not oily, with red and golden colours.

Guangxi

Banana Leaf Rice Paste — A Must for Festivals

This is a kind of paste made of glutinous rice. Because it is wrapped with banana leaves, it has the faint scent of banana leaf. Guangxi people would like to have this snack them at every festival.

There are two kinds of banana leaf rice paste: salty and sweet. As for cookery, first prepare 70% of glutinous rice and 30% of Chinese Jien rice and dip it in water for five to six hours, then grinded it into rice slurry and removed the water. If you wanted to make it sweet, melt some sugar into the tonic first, then pour it into the flour and add in an appropriate amount of lard and blend the materials. If you want to make it salty, then replace sugar with salt. Now you can wrap the stuffing with the paste and put the paste onto banana leaves. Finally, steam it in a pot with slow fire, and it is ready to be served.

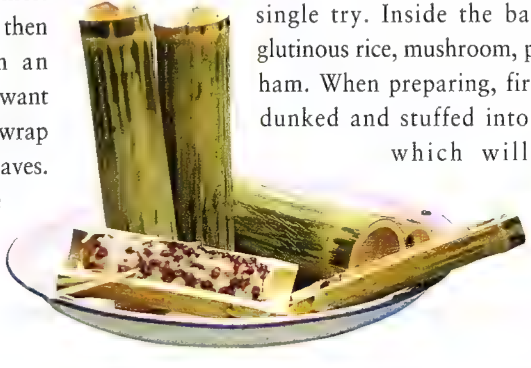
The Distinctive Horsemeat Rice Noodle

It is a kind of hot soup rice noodle cooked with horsemeat. The horsemeat and horse entrails used are first pickled or boiled in saltpeter soup, then it is stored in a pottery jar for a certain period of time before drying.

Firstly, cook the rice noodle in horse bone soup, then take it out into a bowl along with some horse bone soup, then put the sliced horsemeat on top and add bittern sauce.

Zhuang Nationality Bamboo Tube Rice

The scenery of Longsheng terrace fascinates everyone. The bamboo tube rice there also make people fall in love with it at a single try. Inside the bamboo tube, it has glutinous rice, mushroom, peanut and preserved ham. When preparing, firstly, the material is dunked and stuffed into the bamboo tube, which will then be rolled constantly on a fire for two hours.



黔 Guizhou

Baby Shred — A New Vegetarian Experience

As the vegetable shred wrapped in the flour sheet looks like a wrapped baby, this snack is called Baby shred. Put seasonal vegetable such as sprout, cucumber, carrot and lettuce shred onto a big piece of flour sheet, and then add several deep-fried beans before wrapping it up. Be sure to add a small spoonful of Guizhou chilly sauce!

Bean sprout, bean starch vermicelli, kelp shred, bean curd and cucumber shred can all be used as stuffing material. The sauce is delicately made with soy sauce, vinegar and chilly.

Changwang Noodle — 12 Essential Steps

Changwang Noodle is a famous snack in Guiyang and is served in all major noodle restaurants. It made a debut in 1862. It cooks egg noodle with chitterlings, pig's blood, fried diced pork, chilly oil, soy sauce and shallot. Strictly speaking, the cooking process involves a total of 12 steps, including boiling, scalding, soaking of eight dressings, etc. The egg noodle is not sticky; the fried diced pork tastes tender but not too soft; the chicken soup is goluptious. These are all required to ensure the authentic quality of Changwang Noodle.

The Lovers' Bean Curd Dice

Behind this romantic name there is a touching story. It is said that in the period of war, Guiyang was often attacked. There was a middle-aged couple who made a living by roasting bean curd dices, and their shop eventually became a temporary refuge. Some young people who met at the shop fell in love and even got married. Therefore, the baked bean curd dices are also called Lover's Bean Curd Dices.

The lover's bean curd dices are to be dunked and fermented in water before cutting into small dices. After roasting, the bean curd can be served with pepper, ginger powder, mashed garlic and soy sauced.

滇 Yunnan

"Over the Bridge" Rice Noodle

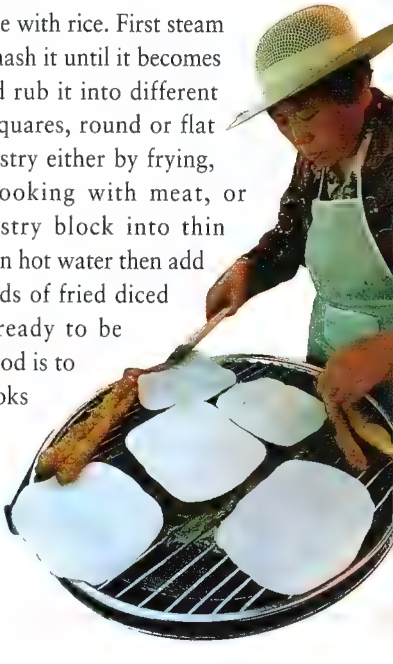
The "Over the Bridge" Rice Noodle originates from Mengzi County in southern Yunnan Province. It is said that a scholar came to the island and his wife walked over a bridge everyday to deliver rice noodle for him. Once she discovered that chicken oil could help keep the heat within the soup, she added chicken oil into the rice noodle. The name of "Over the Bridge" Rice Noodle has been in use ever since then.

Transparency is very important to the soup, which is normally boiled with chicken or ducks; all sorts of meat needed to be cut into slices as thin as the cicada's wings; leek or bean sprout used in the condiment are scalded in hot water and then cooled with cold water to preserve the green colour before serving.

Chinese Style Hash Browns — Yam Cake

It is mashed and blended with flour into a paste, then deep-fried in a pot of oil until it looks golden brown. Then it is taken out of the pot and sprinkled with seasoned salt and pepper. It becomes the hottest snack on streets of Kunming, Dali and Lijiang and even Guizhou.

The Strange Pastry Block



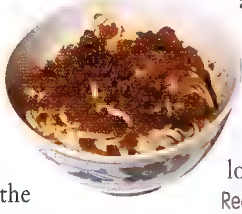
Pastry block is made with rice. First steam the dunked rice, then mash it until it becomes pulpy. Take it out and rub it into different shapes such as bars, squares, round or flat portions. Cook the pastry either by frying, boiling, steaming, cooking with meat, or braising. Cut the pastry block into thin shreds, quick boil of it in hot water then add chicken soup and various kinds of fried diced meat in the bowl and it is ready to be served. The other serving method is to roast the pastry block till it looks golden, then apply sesame jam and wrap a few pieces of meat or deep-fried twisted dough sticks.

Sichuan

Meaty Stuff — Zhong Dumpling

The peel of Zhong Dumpling should be home made, as the handmade peel is not too soft or too hard. It is a bit chewy and not too thick too. There are two major kinds of Zhong Dumpling: Chilly Oil Dumpling and Plain Soup Dumpling. The former is seasoned with chilly and vegetable oil. Various kinds of other seasoning such as soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic juice and salt can also be applied. The latter comes with plain soup and is suitable for those who did not like hot food.

Dandan Noodle — Cook as You Order



Dandan Noodle is a famous kind of snack in Chengdu. It is invented in 1841. It is named so as the hawkers initially put the noodles in the hauler (dan in Chinese) they carried on their shoulders. As for the preparing method, the noodle is first made with flour, and then it is cooked and added with specially prepared ground pork. The taste is a bit salty, fresh and a bit spicy. Currently there are many kinds of Dandan Noodle such as the Chicken Shred and Bean Curd Dandan Noodle, Green Pepper and Assorted Sauce Dandan Noodle, Mandarin Duck Dandan Noodle and Plain Soup Dandan Noodle.

Lai Dumpling

Lai Dumpling features smooth shell and good stuffing. It developed from a single type of black sesame stuffing to over 10 kinds such as rose, ice orange, mashed date, sweet osmanthus and cherry. Dumpling with different stuffing comes with different shapes as well. The lovely shapes are including round, oval, and pillow-shape.

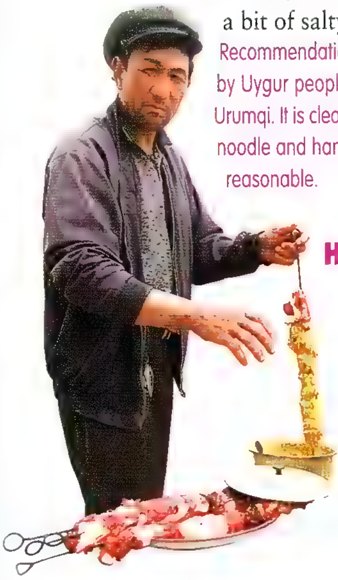
Recommendation: Zhong dumpling at 7 Tidu Street, Lai dumpling at 23 Zongfu Street, and Dandan noodle at 3 Zhongshan Street, Taisheng South Road.

Xinjiang

Only for the Guests — Hand-Grab Rice

"Hand-grab rice" is called "Bou Nor" in Uygur language. It is the food that the Uygur people treat their guests. It is made of fresh mutton, carrot, onion, edible vegetable oil, lamb oil and rice. As for cookery, chop the mutton into small pieces and deep fry it. Onion, carrot and rice are added and fried, with a bit of salty water. It is ready after 40 minutes.

Recommendation: **Anjur** (Uygur language that meant fig) ran by Uygur people is one of the hottest fast food restaurant in Urumqi. It is clean and tidy. It serves Uygur food such as kabob, noodle and hand-grab rice. The food is good and the price is reasonable.



Hottest Snack — Kabob

Like roasted whole sheep, authentic kabob is in shiny yellow colour, tender in texture and tastes a bit spicy with fresh goluptious flavour. It is not greasy and did not have muttony odor. Mutton should be cut it into slices with an even proportion of fat and lean. Then set them onto a metal hook and place them on the stove. Sprinkle some salt, cumin powder and chilly powder onto the surface while fanning on the fire. Roll it as it is roasted and it would be ready in a few minutes.

Over 50 kinds — Rang Pancake

The character "Rang" comes from Persian language. The Uygur people call "Rang pancake" as "Ermike" until Islamic religion is introduced in Xinjiang.

There are many kinds of Rang Pancakes. The most common kinds are Meat Rang, Oil Rang, Corn Rang and Sesame Rang. The cooking method is quite similar to Han pancake. Salty water and barm are added to the flour. Blended and well rubbed, the pancake is ready.

Recommendation: **Abulako-Dalman** of Urumqi sells the best "Rang". It is the first restaurant in Xinjiang who registers Rang as their brand name. It has many braches over the city, with the headquarters at Xibei Road. There is a branch at the end of Changjiang Road at Wuyi Night Market.

Shaanxi

Over 3,000 Years of History — House Bread in Beef or Mutton Soup

It is almost as famous as the terracotta warriors and horses of the Qinshihuang Cemetrey and it had a history of over 3,000 year!

Careful selection of fine ingredients is a must for a nice bowl of house bread in beef or mutton soup. In traditional restaurants, meat, bones, water and seasoning are added into the huge pot of bone soup and never cease the fire. There are soups that are over 100 years old and they are thick and tasty. The pancake served with the soup is called "Tuotuo Cake", which is exquisitely made. One side of the cake has a stamp in ring pattern while the other has one in chrysanthemum pattern. The flour used is half-fermented. It is only fried to be 80-90% done. This is the best time to taste the cake.

Recommendation: **Laosunjia Restaurant**

Profile: Established in 1898, its house bread in beef or mutton soup tastes thick and a bit salty. At the same time, the restaurant also serves large plate mutton, roasted mutton, roasted whole-sheep, stir fried mutton and other dozens of traditional and fusion Muslim food.

Address: Southeast Corner of Dong Street at Duanli Men, Xi'an (Headquarters)

Left to Dongguan Zheng Street, Dongmen Wai, Xi'an (New branch)

Tel: (029) 8248 2993/8827 2352

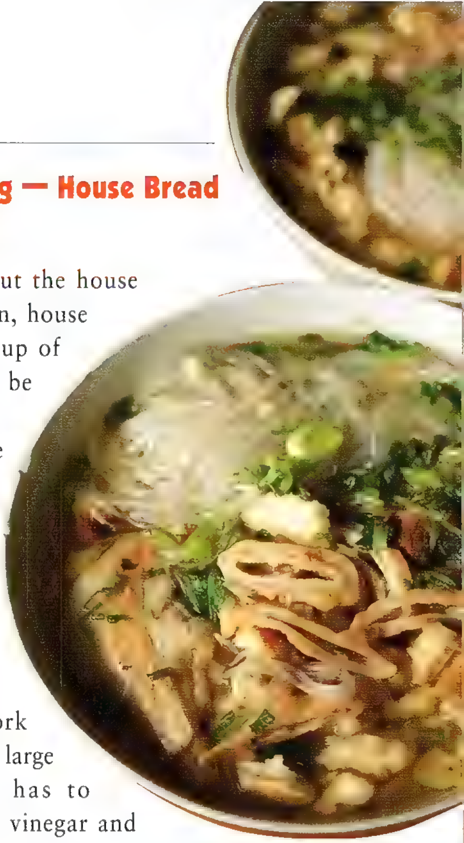
Recommendation: **Tong Sheng Xiang Restaurant**

Profile: The restaurant was established by three Hui brothers at Zhuba Market opposite to the Bell and Drum Tower in 1920. The House Bread in Beef or Mutton Soup is famous. Traditional snacks such as basin mutton, assorted cake in soup and fried mutton are available.

Address: South to Bell and Drum Town Square, Xi'an

Tel: (029) 8721 7512 / 8721 8711 / 8723 3480

Assorted Seasoning — House Bread in Gourd Tip Soup



When talking about the house bread in soup of Xi'an, house bread in gourd tip soup of Han style should not be missed.

Gourd tip is the local way to call pig rectum. The meat stuff used is mainly pork large intestine and bottom section of rectum. The bune cap has been removed. There are a lot of work involved in washing the large intestine. The chef has to repeatedly rub it with vinegar and salt, washed, peeled and scratched until it becames white and clean. Main materials used are pig's leg bone, pork and hen. More than 16 kind of seasons are used.

To enjoy the food, you must constantly rinse the pieces with boiling meat soup until it is fully absorbed. The house bread is a kind of fully cooked fermented bread, therefore no more cooking is needed. When breaking the house bread, it does not need to be in small pieces. After rinsing, garlic leave, caraway and pepper powder are added in the soup. When eating the house bread in soup, just add some sweetened garlic, kraut and chilly sauce to fresh up your mouth.

Recommendation: **Chun Fa Sheng Restaurant**

Profile: Chun Fa Sheng mainly serves house bread in gourd tip soup, House bread in gourd tip and seafood soup, and house bread in beef's blood soup. Recently it has introduced the House bread in gourd tip soup banquet, and large intestine pot.

Tips on Eating House Bread in Soup

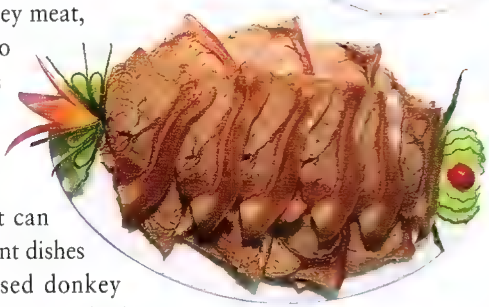
It is better to try hand-made house bread instead of those machine made ones, since they can absorb the soup more easily.

Breaking the bread required a lot of patience. It should be broken into small pieces, ideally as small as soy beans. If the pieces are too big, they will not be soft and chewy. If they are too small, they will become a bowl of porridge.

One should only eat them bit by bit and better not to stir the whole bowl. Otherwise, it will ruin the overall flavour and taste.

Donkey Meat — Various Ways for Serving

The whole donkey can be eaten, and there are many ways of serving. For example, the meat can be served with house bread and millet congee as breakfast. When stuffing the cake with donkey meat, some "Menzi" can be used to improve the flavour. "Menzi" is made from donkey meat soup and starch, which is then dried and looked red. It is more tasty than donkey meat. Donkey meat can also be cooked in a pot into different dishes such as fried donkey liver, braised donkey meat and beef, fried donkey meat, dried donkey meat shred and braised donkey leg. Cold donkey dishes include "donkey intestines", five-flavour donkey meat, gold coin donkey meat and fried donkey tongue. Apart from these, there are also dishes like donkey's tail and donkey's leg.

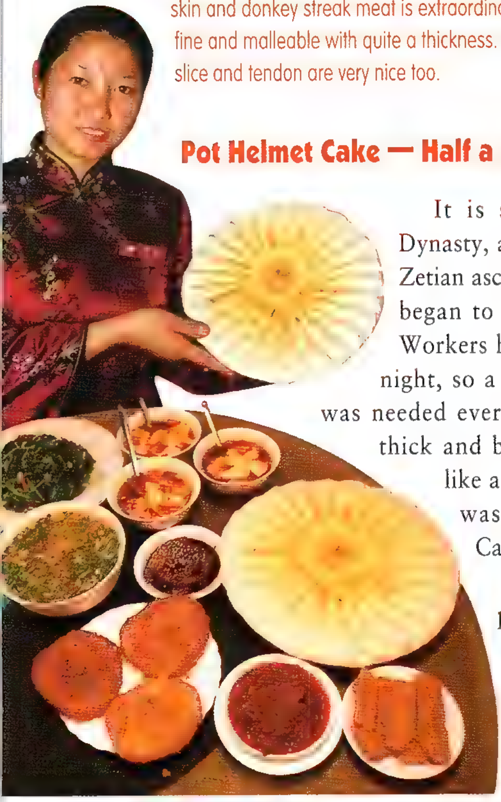


Recommendation: **Deh Rui Ju**

Deh Rui Ju is a famous donkey meat restaurant in Xi'an. All donkeys are authentic northern Shaanxi donkey. The selected donkeys should be between two and three years old and the weight should be kept as around 75 kg. The donkeys are only slaughtered on the day of cooking and the meat is never left over night.

Donkey meat is mainly served in hotpot here. The soup in the hotpot is made with donkey bones and donkey meat. The soup is thick, white, and tasted plain. You can order donkey skin, donkey streaky meat, donkey stomach and donkey intestines. All are cooked when served. Put them into the pot for a while, and it is ready to eat with a dip of the sauce. Donkey skin and donkey streak meat is extraordinary delicious. Donkey skin is fine and malleable with quite a thickness. Donkey intestines, stomach slice and tendon are very nice too.

Pot Helmet Cake — Half a Kilogram Each



It is said that in Tang Dynasty, after the empress Wu Zetian ascended the throne, she began to build her cemetery. Workers had to work day and night, so a big portion of food was needed every day. Therefore, a thick and big cake that looked like a helmet was made. It was called Pot Helmet Cake.

The cake is in the pattern of chrysanthemum. It has even colour and distinct layers, with strong flavour of wheat. Each cake weighs about 0.5 kg. It is easy to store and carry.

Never Fall Apart — Jellied Bean Curd

The jellied bean curd of Gan County is well known for its pure white colour and smoothness. It is white, fresh, tender but does not fall apart when being rolled over or stirred. The taste of jellied bean curd has a lot to do with the seasoning. It is best served with soybeans, coriander, preserved szechuan pickle flakes and chilly oil.

Fine Dried Noodle — The Secret of Vein Wheat

It is a kind of minced meat noodle. The most important step is to select material made from wheat grown in clover field. This kind of wheat has thin skin and high content of protein. It has veins and is therefore called "vein wheat". The noodle made with this kind of flour that tastes smooth and chewy.

Recommendation: **Lao Gan Zhou Restaurant**

Profile: When the restaurant was newly opened, the helmet cake and jellied bean curd used were all made in Gan County, which is 3 hours drive from Xi'an. But now the restaurant is so popular that there is no time for transportation. Now it has its own workshop in Xi'an.

Address: 8 Heping Road, Xi'an City

Three specialties of Lao Gan Zhou Restaurant

Pot helmet cake: It has delicate pattern. The cake made here are much thinner then those made in Fufeng of Qishan. It is crispy outside and soft inside. It has a strong flavour of wheat. The restaurant also serves pot helmet cakes of different flavours to suit different taste.

Fine dried noodle: It is fine dried noodle cooked by chicken soup. It is a little sour but not spicy. The bowl is small so you can keep your good manner.

Jellied bean curd: This is something you cannot afford missing. There are strict requirements on the soy beans and water used to make it. Let alone the fineness and smoothness, there is a bit of bitterness. The seasonings are not cooked green peas, kohlrabi, preserved Sichuan pickle flakes nor dense bittern sauce, but only caraway shreds, light-coloured soup and a little chilly oil. It tastes not too salty or oily or spicy. The taste is still the original flavour of jellied bean curd which makes it salubrious and natural!

Famous Snack of Tang Dynasty — Sanyuan Thousand-Layer Pancake

It is also called "Golden Thread Oil Pagoda". It looks like a pile of cotton yarn. When you stir it, you will find that it is a long bundle of thin thread. For cookery, the paste should be as thin as possible, with leaf lard, salt and concoction flour applied. Rolled, cut, and pressed again until it is about one centimetre thick. This thin sheet is again cut into very thin shreds set into a round pile shape. Steams the pile until it is done.

Bubble Oil Cake — Thinner than the Cicada Wings

When making this oil cake, first scald some flour then presses the paste into a very thin sheet, then white sugar, walnut kernel and rose jam are added. Presses it into thin cakes and fry it in a pot of boiling oil. It grows like a balloon. When you put it into your mouth, it cracks and it is empty inside. All the flavours are in the bottom bit of the cake.

Lump Noodle — Three Choices for You

There are three ways of eating lump noodle. First, it can be served with sour soup and minced meat. Second, it is also dry blend noodle, which meant blending the minced meat with the lump noodle and serves with vinegar and chilly sauce. Three, "over the bridge" serving like the "Over bridge" rice noodle of Yunnan. Dip the noodle into the sour soup, then blend it in a small bowl.

Recommendation: **Lao Huang's Home**
Address: Shizi, Government Street, Sanyuan
Transport: Xi'an Coach Station (next to the train station) has buses going to Sanyuan every 20 minutes. The ticket is about ¥10.
Tel: (910) 227 6348

Oil-Sprinkle Noodle — Famous Shaanxi Noodle

Oil-sprinkle noodle is a famous in Shaanxi. After the hand made noodle is cooked and put into a bowl, shallot, meant shred, bunge prickly ash power and salt are added, then a thick layer of chilly oil would be applied. Finally, the chef would scoop out a scoopful of boiling peanut oil. As the sound and steam go, the noodle is ready to be served.

Chinese hamburger — House break with preserved ham

Looks like a hamburger, it is made with preserved ham. It is seasoned with Shaoxing wine, suger candy, aniseeds and bunge prickly ash. After boiling for about two hours, turn the meat upside down, and keep boiling with mild fire for three hours. Then the meat should be taken out of the soup and deboned. It is served with leek leaf and house bread. Look at the colour of the bread, you will know if it is professionally made. There should be a cloud-like piece of stigma called "Tiger Pelt". On the other side there should be a clear pattern of a small ring.

Recommendation: **Fan's shop**
It was in 1920's when the Fan family established their first shop in Xi'an. Their preserved ham and the house bread beated all the competitors. Therefore, it is not only popular in Xi'an but also in Beijing and Shanghai. Later on, the Fan family sold the restaurant but the new owner is still using this name now.

Recommendation: **Qin Yu House Bread with Meat Shop**
This shop is rather small. It is opposite the east gate of the Stone Tablet Museum at the southern end of Cypress Forest Street. Though the shop is small and the decoration is rather simple, it is popular. The specialty is house bread, with stuffing like meat and bean curd.

Improving Eyesight — Diruan Bun

Diruan is a fungus that looks like agaric. After the rainy season in summer, they will grow in the wild. Diruan is the main ingredient, with a bit of bean curd, shallot and seasoning. It is said that it can help improving eyesight.

The Life-Saving Cuisine in a Coffin

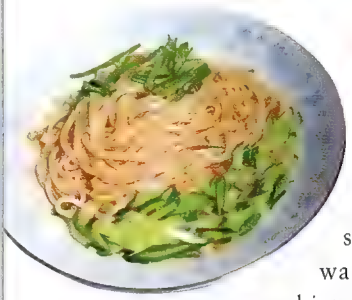
Fan's makes the best house bread in Xi'an. It is said that there was an official family named Fan in Tang Dynasty who helped the poor. Fan once helped a man who could not afford burying his mother. Later the man earned his fortune in preserved ham business. In order to thank the Fan's family, he presented Fan with a finely made coffin on his 80th birthday.

A few years later, the Fan's family bankrupted. Madame Fan wanted to sell the coffin and she found that it is full of good-smelling preserved ham! She then asked the housemaids to sell the ham on the street. The hams were so popular. Madame Fan then cooked more ham with the juice left in the coffin. After thousands of years, the Fan's preserved ham had won and maintained its fame.

Nine Special Features — Minced Meat Noodle

The Qishan minced meat noodle is as thin as a piece of paper. It is semi-transparent and pliable with veins. It had hot and large amount of soup as well as chilly oil and lard on top of the soup but is not greasy. Its sour and spicy flavour is very distinctive.

Qishan noodle restaurant, located on Jianguo Road, Dong Da Street, serves authentic noodle. The food here, and even the boss and the staff, are all from Qishan. This is a truly Shaanxi restaurant.



Finely Made — Noodle Sheets

Qishan noodle sheets is famous. The production process is more complicated than that for ordinary noodle sheets and rice sheets. First the starch paste is washed and blended in a pot, and pressed into a flour sheet as thin as lotus leaf. Steamed, and it is ready to serve with different kinds of sauce.

Recommendation: For authentic Qishan noodle and noodle sheets, look for those small restaurants with the Qishan sign, or try the franchise restaurant named "Yong Ming Qishan Restaurant". These restaurants all serve oil-sprink noodle and belt noodle.

Returning to Simplicity — Dishes of Rural Households

People from the city all long for a health diet, and it is popular to eat wild vegetable in recent years. So they all rush to rural areas to eat local food. As a result, some farmers ran rural household meal restaurants. The Wenhao Coarse Cereals Restaurant in Xi'an is the biggest among them.

Recommendation: **Wenhao Coarse Cereals Restaurant**

Profile: They offer rural meal and wild vegetable in Xi'an style, such as fried Bulanzi (mixture of coked potato and noodle), steamed shredded potato with seasoning, Yulin Xiangna fried cake and the sour, spicy and bitter vegetable. Besides, there are many other snacks such as the noodle sheet, vinegar noodle sheet, Qin Town rice skin and many other snacks and food made of wild vegetable.

Address: 2 Mid Section, Nan Er Huan Raod, Xi'an

Tel: (029) 8522 2222/8526 5555

Recommendation: **Xin Tao Yuan Villa**

Profile: The main gate of the villa adopted the style of the ancient landlord villa. It felt good to see such ancient style building. At entering the court, you would see that the wing-rooms line up on both sides while there are suites on both sides of the main hall. Stone table and stone chairs are piled up. Bundles of corn and red chilly are hung on the wall. There are farming tools as decorations.

Address: 1 Dongfeng Road, Weiyang District Tourism Development Area, Xi'an

Tel: (029) 8667 1555

Recommendation: **Dongjin Taoyuan Resort**

Profile: This quiet resort is in the west of the Taoyuan Villa. Almost all the land is garden and vegetable fields. Rural dishes are served. The lodging area is an ancient style official courtyard and is suitable for tour groups or large-scale conference.

Address: 1 Mid Section of Shangji Road, Modern Agricultural Development District, Xi'an

Tel: (029) 8667 5555

Spicy but Gentle — Babao Chilly

Babao chilly is a snack of Pucheng that one cannot miss. The thin and long local chilly is used and is seasoned with minced meat, apple dices and soybeans. It is spicy yet fruity. It is better served with shally house bread.

New Vegetarian Experience — Paper Roll and Vegetable Roll

Did not be mistaken that it is made of paper. It is made of flour that are pressed into extremely thin sheet then rolled up with chopped leek. The vegetable roll contains wild vegetables, that are mixed with dry flour before being steamed. The serving method is similar to that of paper roll.

Recommendation: The snacks introduced above are snacks from Pucheng. A **Pucheng Restaurant** is recently opened in the Fuxue Lane alongside of Xi'an Stone Tablet Museum. The decoration is of ancient style. Private rooms are available on the second floor.

Dumpling — Vivid Shapes

The dumplings are made into small and vivid shape of birds, animals, plants and flowers. The stuffing included pork, beef, mutton, fish, scallop, shrimp and even delicacies such as shark's fin, abalone, and expensive fungus. Sometimes fresh fruit are used. It can be salty, sour, sweet, spicy, hot, fresh or scent. It can be steamed, boiled, deep-fried, or roasted.

Recommendation: **Defachang Dumpling Restaurant**

Profile: Defachang is one of the most famous old restaurants in Xi'an established in 1936. Besides the exquisite dumpling, it also serves home-made dumpling, Shanghai dumpling, stuff bread and other Xi'an snack.

Address: West to Bell and Drum Square, Xi'an

Tel: (029) 8721 4060

王氏正宗
姜糖作坊
电话 322 8925

Legend of Fenghuang Ginger Candy

Photos & Article by Miranda

The snacks of a place often reflect the local culture and customs. The ginger candies produced in Fenghuang of Hunan Province are all named after family names. Behind the sweetness, ginger candies bring out the families' respect of traditions.

Outside the shopping arcade near my home in Hong Kong, several hawkers appeared one day.

Noticing my repeated glace on a pack of ginger candies, a lady came forward and pushed sale. What attracted me was not the candies but the picture of elevated buildings and small boats printed on the packing and its label "The Zhang's ginger candies, Fenghuang, Hunan".

O, Sweet Old Ginger Candies

It was at night when I arrived Fenghuang, western Hunan. I was attracted by a kind of smell in the darkness. When I saw the ginger candy workshops the next morning, I realised it was the smell of ginger that fascinated me. What delighted me was that most ginger shops were household workshops and therefore the production process was open to public.

The recipe of ginger candy may not be a mystery for us. It is made of nothing but raw ginger, black sugar and maltose. However, the production process is very interesting to watch. After the ingredients were melt into a single piece of candy, the auntie from the Fenghuang candy workshop hung it onto an iron hooks and kept pulling it. Iron hook is the trademark of this industry. If you find one at people's door, it means this family makes ginger candies.

The whole piece of ginger candy elongated when pulled. As it cooled down in the air, it became more elastic. The auntie rolled the piece over and over again as if she was performing a ribbon dance. As she was enjoying work, she also entertained others.

At that moment she asked me to "have a try". Before I realised what she meant, she gave me one small piece of ginger candy. Crispy outside and soft inside, it tasted very special when it had not completely cooled down. It was still warm and I could see my fingerprint on it.

Ginger candies in Fenghuang was all named after surnames. They was family properties, family traditions and the vitamin to maintain a family's strain.

How Ginger Candy is Made?

Step one: When the candy block had just been cooked, the auntie just gently hung it up and pulled it slowly. The ginger candy was still soft.

Step two: The ginger candy block that further cooled down became longer as it was pulled. It was the best time to eat the ginger candy when it was still warm.

Step three: After pulling for over 10 minutes, the auntie pulled out a small portion and stretched it into a long piece.

Step four: Then the two aunties used their knives to chop the long piece. The triangular ginger candies finally took shape.

MAY/JUN

June 10~14

Yueyang International Dragon Boat Festival

Venue: South Lake in Yueyang, Hunan Province

What's On: Over 20 teams from the United States, Canada, Australia as well as countries throughout South East Asia and other parts of the world will participate in this dragon boat races. There will also be Dragon boat folk performances.

May 26~June 2

Dalian Scholar Tree Festival

Venue: Dalian, Liaoning Province

What's On: First organised in 1989, the Scholar Tree Festival is popular among both tourist and local people. There will be traditional kite competition, folk dance, concert, tea ceremonies and cultural performances.

May 1

Offering Sacrifices to Mazu

Venue: Meizhou Island, Putian, Fujian Province

What's On: Mazu is a legendary goddess who protects people from the sea. Meizhou Island is the hometown of Mazu. On the birthday of Mazu, Buddhist ceremonies will be held. The temple will be crowned by people from all around the country.

June

Gyangze Tama Festival

Venue: Gyangze, Tibet Autonomous Region

What's on: There will be performances at the inauguration ceremony with a strong ethnic flavour. Recreational activities such as horse racing, shooting on horse, Tibetan opera, songs and dances will be held. People will also trade goods and materials, such as local made cushions, carpets and tapestries.

May 12~15

Macao Open 2005

Venue: Macao

What's On: With presence of high profile players and support of the Macao Golf and Country Club, the Macao Open gives the region's golfers a chance to test their skills with the world's best golfers. More details please click into: www.sport.gov.mo

Now till June 3

Taiwan Lantern Festival

Venue: An-Pin Historical Park, Tainan, Taiwan

What's On: The central theme of the lantern show is divided into 6 stages. The performances include laser lights and music, making this an event a combination of technology and tradition. Lanterns made by master craftsmen featuring the history of Taiwan will be shown.

Now till June 10

From Eastern Han to High Tang: A Journey of Transculturation

Venue: Hong Kong Heritage Museum

What's On: The National Administration for Cultural Heritage has assembled some 200 cultural relics from 50 cultural institutions in 14 provinces. The relics include gold and silver wares, glass wares, burial figures in pottery and wood, Buddhist sculptures, wall paintings and textiles.

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Readership Survey

China Tourism always appreciates feedback from its readers. In accordance with your suggestions, we have recently added a variety of new columns. Still, we need to know more of your opinions, including criticisms and suggestions. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us. Thank you!

Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism*.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
A Blissful Escape to Hangzhou	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Wild Journey to Tibet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Last Tribe of Gunmen: Basha	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Operation on Cultural Relics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Life of a Shadow Play Master	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cover	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Articles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Travel Tips	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Art Design	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other Opinions: ____________________

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Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) ____________________

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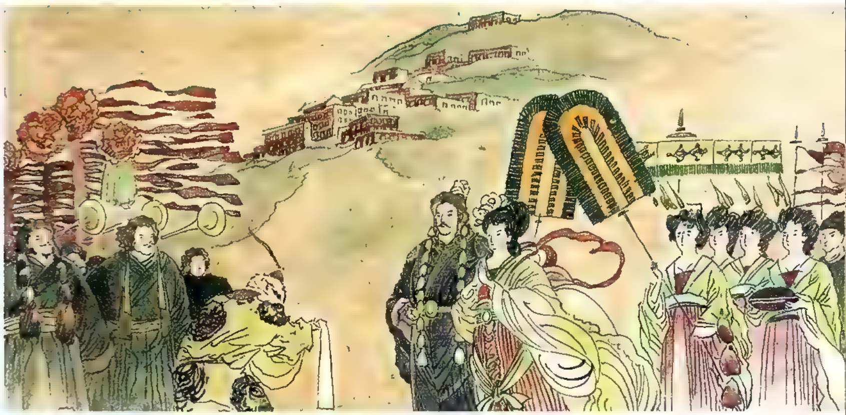
Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. It provides us with invaluable feedback which will help us improve *China Tourism* magazine for you.

*Please mail this questionnaire to our office at 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or fax to (852) 2561 8196.

HIGHLIGHTS OF ISSUE NO. 298

Feature Story: Tang-bo Ancient Road



The Qinghai-Tibet Road is now one of the hottest travelling routes in China. Yet, Princess Wencheng of Tang Dynasty, setting off from Chang'an (today's Xi'an) to Tubo (today's Tibet), had already left her footprint there 1,360 years ago.

This is what historians called "Tang-bo Road" (the road from Tang to Tubo). Like Marco Polo's adventure to China, Xuan Zhuang's journey to India and the Silk Road, Tang-bo Road is of great historical significance. The road was full of hardship faced by a young princess when marrying a stranger in a faraway land. Perhaps this was a political marriage, but it was the first cultural exchange between Tang and Tubo. Princess Wencheng brought with her Chinese medicines, books, and seeds to Tubo. Tang-bo Road marked the friendship between these two royal families.

Apart from this interesting historical background, the landscape itself along Tang-bo Road is fascinating enough. To explore ancient Chinese-Tibetan cultures, or just enjoy the sublime nature, do join our journalist and step into Tang-bo Road.

Discoveries:

Fusong — Hometown of Ginseng

Ginseng is an expensive plant with medical values. Known as one of the "Three Treasures of North-East", ginseng could nourish the body and mind. Yet, wild ginseng is difficult to find nowadays. It's time to take a close look at the traditional planting method. With a mind full of curiosity, our journalist visited Fusong of Changbai Mountain, Jilin—the hometown of ginseng—in search for the famous "baby ginseng".

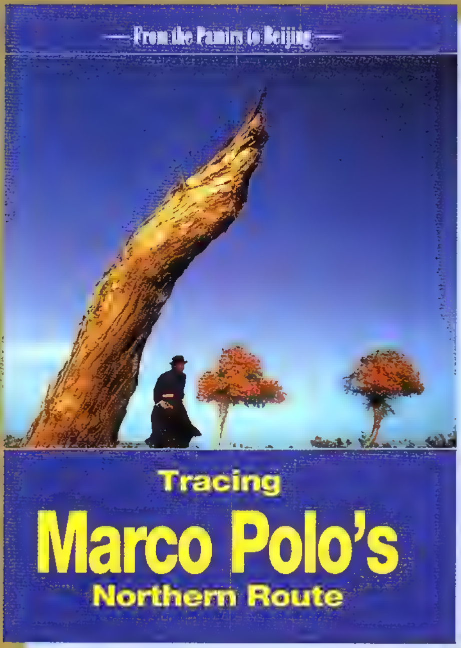
City Snap:

New Beijing culture

Nowadays, a visit to Beijing is simply not complete without going to its bars and cafés. Moving away from old venues such as Shichahai, the new bars and cafés form their own circle in Xihai. This trendy area draws many artists, musicians, students and writers who give rise to a new Beijing culture.

Photographic & Practical Guides
for Your China Tours

Before you set off for your perfect journey, you may have to prepare your itinerary carefully. Each of the following recommended readings offers different types of information which cater to our readers' various interests: exploring, photography, or tourist information. They will be great guides to your China tours.


From the Pamirs to Beijing
Tracing
Marco Polo's
Northern Route

Tracing Marco Polo's Northern Route

A record of an 80-day journey in which our authors drive their jeep 12,000 km long through the northern regions of China following in the footsteps of Macro Polo's historic journey from the Pamir Highland to Beijing. In a medley of images and words, we present you with the fascinating scenery and various ways of life in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet.

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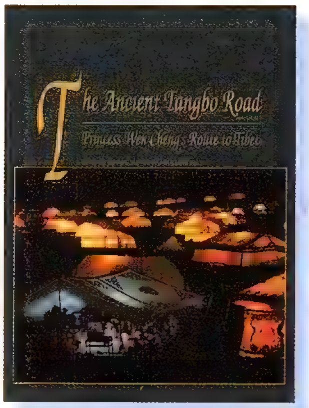
The Ancient Tangbo Road
Princess Wen Cheng's Route to Tibet

The Ancient Tangbo Road

Covering four provinces including Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, and the Tibet Autonomous Region, the ancient Tangbo Road was created on the map when Princess Wen Cheng was sent as a bride to Luoxie (present-day Lhasa) during the Tang Dynasty. Our photographers and writers, who have followed this arduous route, present you the graceful sights and unique ethnic customs on the way.

HK$192

In Search of the Ancient Tea Caravan Route

The ancient Tea Caravan Route can be traced back to 2,000 years ago, starting from Xishuangbanna at China's southwestern end, passing through boundless forests and valleys to the Sino-Indian, Nepalese and Sikkimese borders on Tibet, the "Roof of the World". This book is not-to-be-missed by every daring adventurer.

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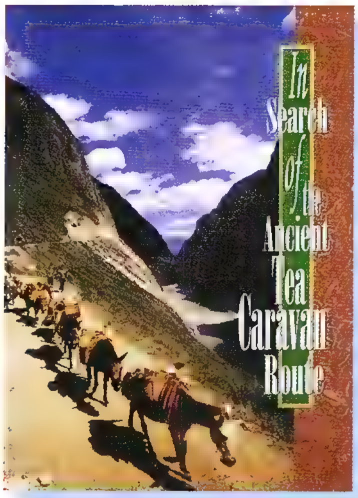
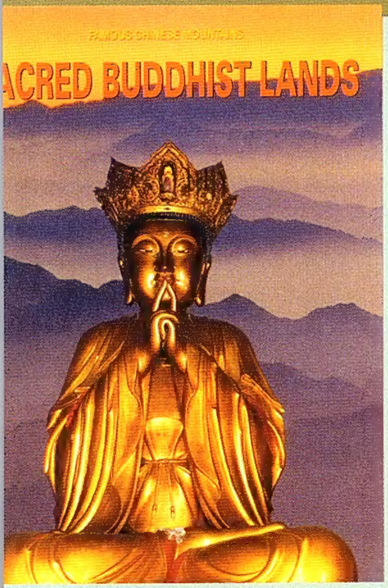

In Search of the Ancient Tea Caravan Route

XINJIANG
A Reliable Handbook for Touring in Xinjiang

Guide to Xinjiang

This book is especially designated for DIY travellers who desire to explore the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. There are detailed introduction to scenic spots in five main areas in Xinjiang including Urümqi, Turpan, Southern and Northern Xinjiang, and Central Tianshan. Practical tourist information on accommodation, ticketing, shopping, local specialty, as well as travel tips are covered.

HK$96



Sacred Buddhist Lands

Buddhism in China is inevitably linked with some of the country's best known mountains. And going deep in the mountains and far away from civilization is an ideal place for retreat. Belonging to the four Bodhisattvas respectively, the four most famous Buddhist mountains — Wutai, Jiuhua, Putuo and Emei — are nestled with numerous monasteries and nunneries which have been worshipped by pilgrims for thousands of years. Tourists to these places will totally be soaked in "Kingdoms of Buddhism".

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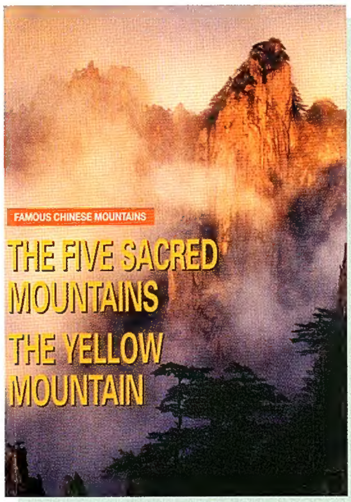

The Five Sacred Mountains
The Yellow Mountain

Located in five provinces in China, every of the Five Sacred Mountains — Taishan, Hengshan, Songshan, Hengshan and Huashan — has its magnificent natural and cultural landscapes. Besides, Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), is also famous for its spectacular rocks, pine trees, and sea of clouds. It will be a great enjoyment in reading both the detailed text and remarkable images by our experienced photographers as recorded in this book.

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FOCUS ON XINJIANG

On the vast land of Xinjiang in Northwest China, there are mountains, basins, deserts and lakes, all providing tourists with numerous attractions — ruins of ancient cities and tombs along the Silk Road; Turpan, an oasis in the desert; Kanas Lake, a gem embedded in the Altay Mountains; Bayanbulak, the Swan Lake; and the world's second largest desert, the Taklimakan. The minority ethnic groups living in Xinjiang, such as the Uygur, Kazak, Mongolian, Uzbek, Tajik, Xibe, Kirgiz and Tatar, all have their own unique and colourful culture.

新
Focus on
Xinjiang

FOCUS ON SHAANXI

Shaanxi is the cradle of the Chinese civilisation and Xi'an was the capital of 13 dynasties. This has left Shaanxi a rich legacy of historical sites and cultural relics. In the provincial capital Xi'an, there is the fascinating terracotta army unearthed from the tomb of the First Emperor, Qin Shihuang; the tomb of Tang-dynasty Wu Zetian, China's first empress; and the stele forest. The province's beauty is capped with the sheer cliffs of Mount Huashan and the yellow earth of the Loess Plateau.

陝
Focus on
Shaanxi

FOCUS ON YUNNAN

The mountainous wonderland of Yunnan enjoys a favourable warm climate all year round. Its capital, Kunming, sitting alongside Yunnan's largest lake, Dianchi, has the honourable name of "Spring City". The province is full of natural wonders and cultural relics, such as the Stone Forests, the Shangri-la, and the ancient cities of Dali and Lijiang. With over 20 diverse ethnic groups making up about one-third of the population, opportunities abound for you to see their characteristic cultures and customs.

滇
Focus on
Yunnan

The Call of China's West

FOCUS ON TIBET

The Tibet Autonomous Region of China is a land of mystery for tourists, a land of wonders for explorers, a land of purity for Buddhists, and the ultimate challenge for mountaineers. Its beautiful landscapes, unique geographical features and rich cultural legacy continue to attract an increasing number of visitors.

The countless attractions of Tibet make it impossible to include them all in one book. This photographic publication offers an introduction to some of the Region's most celebrated features: the Potala Palace and its precious collection of cultural relics; the Jokhang Temple with strings of worshippers prostrating themselves before it; the Shoton Festival and the Sunning of Buddha ceremony; the ruins of the mystical Guge Kingdom; and the amazing Qiangtang Grassland....

At the same time, *Focus on Tibet* outlines the six major routes to Tibet and the many stunning landscapes found along the way.

藏
Focus on Tibet
西藏游

Paperback Only

FOCUS ON GUIZHOU

Guizhou is a land of splendid natural scenery. Its towering mountains and karst landforms team up with the gurgling rivers and magnificent waterfalls to form a wonderful work of Mother Nature. Huangguoshu Waterfalls and the limestone caves are the province's most frequented scenic spots. The 17 ethnic groups living in the picturesque province further colour the land with vivid customs and joyous festivals. It is its natural beauty and culture that make Guizhou a perfect travel destination.

黔
Focus on
Guizhou

FOCUS ON GUANGXI

Unusual topography has endowed the province with numerous spectacular karst formations — limestone caves, pinnacles and rocks. The most famous and enchanting scenic spot is Guilin, and the most travelled route, on the Lijiang River from Guilin to Yangshuo. The coastal city of Beihai has the country's largest beach, the Silver Beach. Other attractions include the diverse traditional customs of ethnic minorities, the Sino-Vietnamese border area, and the mysterious Huashan cliff paintings.

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Focus on
Guangxi

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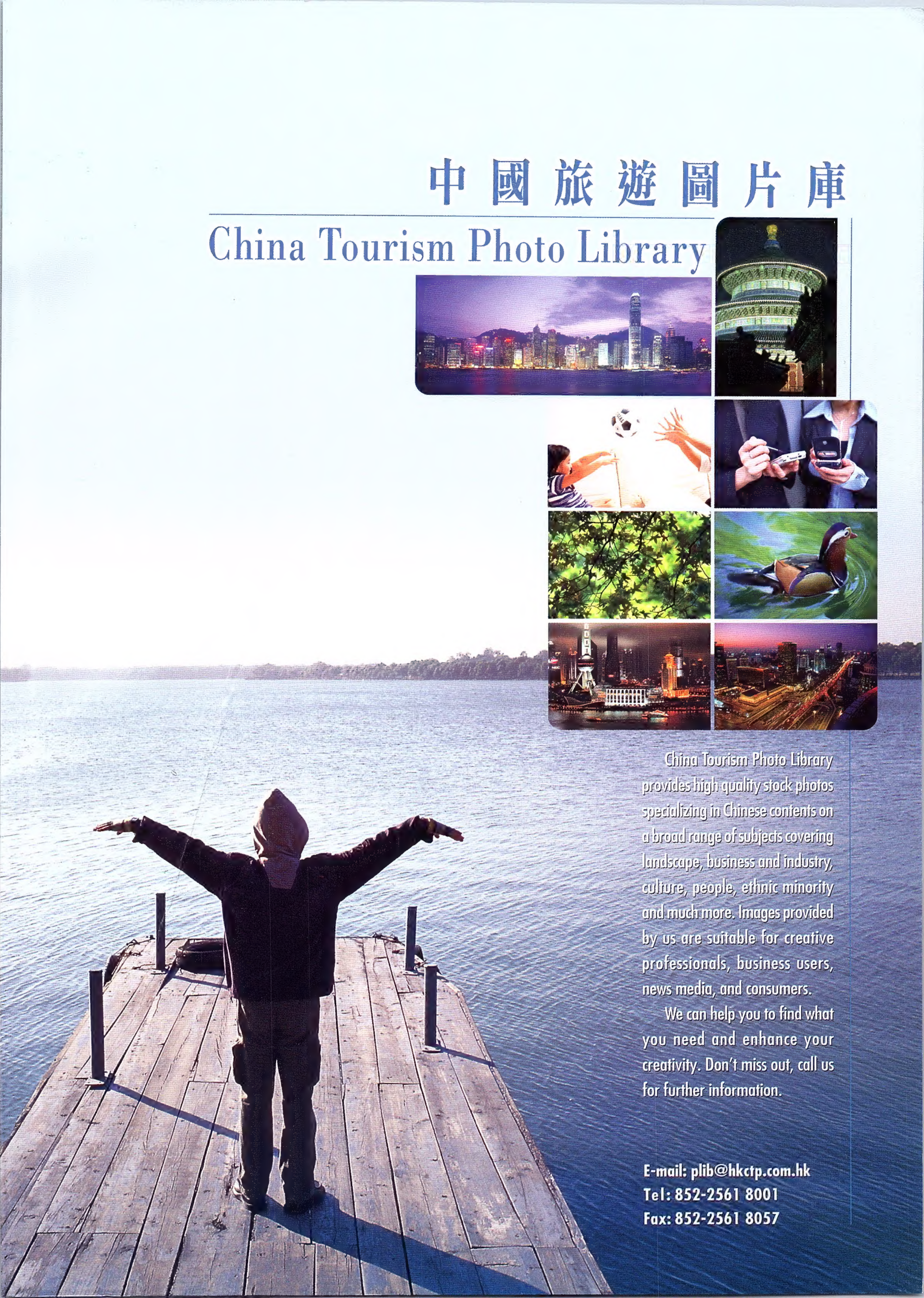

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